

The 2013 Congregational Economic Impact Study

Researched and written at the
Indiana University School of
Philanthropy



SCHOOL OF PHILANTHROPY

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The School of Philanthropy Project Team

Una Osili, PhD, Director of Research
 Amy Thayer, PhD, Associate Director of Research
 Melanie McKittrick, MPA, MA, Project Manager
 Amir Hayat, MA, MS, Statistician
 Adriene Davis Kalugyer, BA, Manager of Public Affairs
 Cynthia Hyatte, Administrative Assistant
 Van Evans, MSW, MS, Research Associate
 Jon Bergdoll, BS, MS, Statistician Assistant
 Grace Baranowski, BA, Research Associate
 Traci Wilmoth, BSCJ, Research Assistant

With Special Thanks To:

Lake Institute on Faith & Giving Team

William G. Enright, PhD, Director
 Aimée Laramore, MBA, Associate Director
 Karen DeGan Stone, MA, Administrative Secretary

Partner Organization Representatives

Brian Kluth, Best Selling Author and Founder, MAXIMUM Generosity
 Phill Martin, MA, Deputy CEO, The National Association of Church Business Administration
 Timothy Shapiro, DMin, President, Indianapolis Center for Congregations
 Molly Wade, Director of Fund Raising, Prison Fellowship
 James Wind, PhD, President, Alban Institute

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Executive Summary

- **How are the different forms of religious expression in the U.S. doing financially following the greatest economic upheaval since the Great Depression?**
- **What are the most significant factors influencing how religious congregations are coping financially today and in the recent past?**
- **What strategies are congregations employing to cope with and confront their changing financial environment?**
- **What are the current trends in the use of electronic tools and media in terms of financial management and fundraising?**

To answer these and other key questions, this study, the second in a series, examines the impact of the economic environment on a sample of U.S. congregations. This study was conducted by the Indiana University School of Philanthropyⁱ and Lake Institute on Faith & Giving at Indiana University School of Philanthropy, in partnership with the Alban Institute, the National Association of Church Business Administration (NACBA), Indianapolis Center for Congregations, and MAXIMUM Generosity.

The objective of this study is to provide information to those interested in the wellbeing of American congregations about how congregations are coping with and confronting not only recent economic events, but also the gradual, long-term changes taking place in the landscape of U.S. religious life. The first two studies in this series will set the foundation for a longitudinal framework in studying U.S. congregational life in future years.

This study includes responses from 3,103 U.S. congregations, of which nearly two-thirds are Mainline Protestant, a quarter are Evangelical Protestant, and the rest are other Christian denominations (such as Historically Black or Catholic), Jewish, or “other” (such as unaffiliated congregations).ⁱⁱ Congregations were asked a series of questions about their finances following the Great Recession, which officially ended in the summer of 2009, as well as questions about their most current finances, including 2011 and 2012. This study also incorporated questions about congregations’ use of electronic giving tools to shed better light on how these forms of payment might be influencing congregational finances.

This study informs not only overall financial trends of surveyed congregations, but also how specific types of congregations talked about money and fared financially during the recession and its aftermath.

Key Findings

This study draws upon three distinct periods to better understand the impact of the Great Recession. Respondents were asked to refer to the 2011 fiscal year, to compare years prior to 2011, and to provide information about conditions up to the first half of 2012. This study does not include complete fiscal year data for 2012. Moreover, since the timing of the Great Recession's impact varied across North America, respondents answered recession-related questions based upon their own experience of when economic conditions were the worst for them.

U.S. congregations are generally improving financially. However, those with older attendees and those whose clergy are uninformed about congregational giving are experiencing the greatest challenges.

As testament of the tenacity of congregations and the integrity of their leadership during challenging economic times, this study found that greater percentages of responding congregations saw increases in fundraising receipts and in pledges and dues received in 2011 from 2010 than those that realized decreases. Congregations with a younger average age of attendees saw greater increases in fundraising receipts between 2010 and 2011 than congregations with older attendees,ⁱⁱⁱ as did Mainline Protestants and “other” denominations.^{iv}

While greater percentages of responding congregations saw increases than decreases in fundraising receipts received in 2011, nearly a third of all congregations saw no change in fundraising receipts in this time period.

In addition, between the first half of 2011 and the first half of 2012, a greater percentage of responding congregations saw increases in fundraising receipts than those that saw no difference or declines. Those congregations in which clergy are reportedly actively aware of the giving trends among their members were more likely to see positive fundraising results in the first half of 2012.^v In addition, congregations with a younger average age of attendees were more likely to see increases in fundraising receipts than congregations with older attendees.^{vi}

Despite overall positive trends in fundraising receipts, pledges, and budgeting in 2011, the majority of congregations' revenues have not kept pace with inflation in recent years.

In addition to the majority of responding congregations reporting increases in fundraising receipts in 2011 from 2010, the majority of responding congregations also reported an increase in overall pledges or collections in 2011. However, despite these positive trends, only about four in ten congregations had revenues that kept pace or were ahead of inflation between 2007 and

2011.^{vii} Congregations with the oldest average age of attendees were more likely to report that revenue growth lagged behind inflation when compared to congregations with the youngest attendees.^{viii}

Changes in average congregational gift size and the number of donors are the main drivers of fundraising success.

The majority of the responding congregations that reported increases in fundraising receipts in 2011 from 2010 attributed the increase to a greater number of donors or higher average gifts. Conversely, if a congregation reported a decrease in fundraising receipts in 2011 from 2010, such a decrease was most likely attributed to a declining number of donors or lower average gifts.

Congregations are increasing their budgets in the areas of missions and revenue-generating activity.

Congregational budgets are largely contingent upon how the congregation fared financially in the previous year. Coinciding with the increases in fundraising receipts in 2011 from 2010, nearly half of responding congregations reported budget increases in 2012 compared with 2011. Those increases were more likely to be allocated toward salaries, outreach programs, mission activities, and revenue-generating activities. If a congregation made cuts to the budget, most likely it reduced funds for staffing, brick-and-mortar projects, building maintenance, and internal programs.

Congregations have more work to do in the area of educating congregations on financial planning and charitable giving.

The majority of leaders from responding congregations are discussing or preaching approximately the same amount or less on the importance of giving, both inside the congregation and to outside groups, than prior to the recession. When asked about the offering of specific courses, workshops, classes, or seminars on personal finance or charitable giving, slightly greater than a third of responding congregations reported offering at least one type of these educational resources to congregants.

Evangelical Protestant congregations are more likely to offer financial or charitable giving courses than are Mainline Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and denominations classified in the “other” category.^{ix} In addition, congregations with an average age of attendees 65 years and above were less likely to offer financial or charitable giving courses than congregations with the youngest average age of attendees.^x

The majority of congregations employ some type of electronic giving.

Considering the decline in congregational attendance, electronic giving tools provide congregations the means to raise revenue consistently. Electronic giving options allow congregants to give at any time from virtually anywhere, even if they do not attend services weekly. In this study, two-thirds of responding congregations were found to employ some type of electronic giving option for their congregants' offerings, tithes, dues, and other types of payments. More than four in ten of responding congregations receive direct deposit transfers from congregants, and three in ten receive checks or transfers from congregants' online bank accounts. About 10 percent of congregations reported the receipt of contributions direct through the congregational website.

Introduction

Collectively, religious organizations are perhaps the most significant and important social institution in America. While this might seem like a bold statement, statistics abound on the importance of religion to the American way of life. Across the approximately 300,000 congregations in the United States, 60 percent of adults attend services at least once per year and 25 percent attend services weekly. Each year, Americans give about a third of all charitable dollars to religion.^{xi} In 2011, charitable contributions to religious organizations are estimated to have totaled \$95.88 billion. That amount was nearly two and a half times as much as giving to education—the second-highest category!

Between 2010 and 2011, inflation-adjusted giving to religious organizations realized a decline of 1.7 percent.^{xii} The decline in charitable receipts within the religious subsector, while likely driven by several factors, appears to have been largely related to declining church attendance coupled with lower giving rates among members.^{xiii} Since the mid-1960's, the number of people attending services has been on the decline.^{xiv} According to the Pew Forum's 2007 U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, 16 percent of Americans are not affiliated with any particular faith.^{xv} Of this group, about half had been affiliated with some type of religion as children. What may be more striking is the drop in religious affiliation among young adults. About a quarter of Americans between the ages of 18 and 29 report that they have no religious affiliation.

As attendance patterns shift, the constitution of American congregants as a whole is also changing in terms of ethnic composition, age, and other factors.^{xvi} These changes all affect congregational attendance and membership, which, in turn, influence congregational social and economic stability.

How Congregations Have Fared Since the Recession

While national figures are useful to get a sense of the overall economic impact of the recession, we recognize that the effect of the recession varied in different parts of the country. Congregations' responses to the recession were thus highly localized and personal. Congregations in some parts of the country faced massive outward migrations due to increases in unemployment and foreclosures in their communities, while those in other areas were buffered from the worst outcomes.

The vast majority of congregations rely on the money they raise each year to support operating costs.^{xvii} When congregational members move, they more often than not take their offerings with them. When a high proportion of congregational members move in a short period of time, the financial results can be devastating to a congregation. Indeed, this report reveals that since the worst of the recession, while the highest percentage of congregations (38.1 percent) reported that

attendance has stayed the same, more congregations reported that attendance has declined (35.9 percent) than increased (24.7 percent).

When responding congregations assessed how they *felt* their congregations weathered the recession, the majority of respondents indicated that their congregation fared well or very well since the worst of the recession (73.9 percent). However, when comparing *actual* post-recession revenues with inflation, only 39 percent reported that congregational revenues kept pace or were ahead of inflation between 2007 and 2011.^{xviii} As a result of these effects, about one-third of respondents (31.9 percent) indicated that their congregation laid off at least one staff member between 2008 and 2011.

When asked to provide their impressions concerning how their congregation responded to the recession, respondents sometimes painted a more optimistic picture than what their actual revenue data revealed. This may indicate that congregational members and leaders tend to look on the bright side and are perhaps less realistic when it comes to their congregation's finances.

Congregations that successfully navigated through the recession pointed to utilizing strong financial and management teams, sound bookkeeping and finance practices, and maintaining transparency with congregants. Others promoted the idea of “preaching and practicing stewardship” and offering financial education to clergy as lessons learned on the heels of the recession.

Overview on How Congregations are Currently Faring

Fundraising Receipts

While “fundraising” is not a term employed by many congregations, our generic usage here refers to the campaigns and requests for funds, tithes, offerings, stewardship, donations, and so forth. Half of the responding congregations reported an increase in total fundraising amounts from 2010 to 2011, while 22 percent realized a decrease.

Among those who reported an increase, the greatest percentages attributed the increase to receiving higher average gifts (53.7 percent) and having more donors (41.9 percent). Among those who reported a decrease, the greatest percentages attributed the decrease to having fewer donors (69.0 percent) and receiving lower average gifts (47.8 percent).

When asked about fundraising receipts received in the first half of 2011 compared with the first half of 2012, the greatest percentage of responding congregations reported an increase (37.5 percent), while 21 percent reported a decrease and 31 percent reported that receipts stayed the same.

Pledges and Fundraising-Stewardship Initiatives

Nearly three-quarters of responding congregations have an annual stewardship or pledge campaign (72.2 percent). Evangelical Protestant congregations were less likely to report having an annual pledge campaign, when compared with Mainline Protestant, Catholic, and “other” congregations.^{xix}

The majority of congregations (58.9 percent) reported an increase in overall pledges or dues payments between 2010 and 2011, while 31 percent reported declines during this period. These figures are very similar to changes congregations saw in fundraising receipts between 2010 and 2011.

Bequests, Estate Gifts, and Endowments

As people age, establishing a personal legacy becomes more important to them. In the next few decades, estates will provide for very significant transfers of wealth to families as well as nonprofit organizations. Research shows that estates that leave bequests to charitable organizations of any type do so with organizations they trust. Religious congregations and organizations must ready themselves for this changeover of wealth by cultivating in members a sense of trust through appropriate stewardship of congregational resources and transparent financial practices.

In this study, about one-third (32.2 percent) of responding congregations reported receiving one or more bequests in 2011. Across all congregations that received bequests, the average dollar value was nearly \$108,000 and the median was about \$22,500.

Slightly more than half (52.7 percent) of the surveyed congregations have an endowment. A quarter indicated their congregation’s operating budget relies on the endowment. The average proportion of a congregation’s operating budget that relies on the endowment—if it does—is 13.6 percent (the median is 8.0 percent).

Congregational Budgeting

Nearly half (48.9 percent) of all responding congregations’ budgets increased between 2011 and 2012. The highest percentages of congregations budgeted more for salaries, outreach programs, revenue-generating activities and mission activities.

Roughly the same percentage of responding congregations’ budgets decreased (25.6 percent) as stayed the same (24.3 percent). If reductions were made, the highest percentages of

congregations reduced funds budgeted for building maintenance, internal programs, staffing, and brick-and-mortar projects.

Clergy Awareness of Congregational Giving

Clergy's awareness of congregational giving trends may be linked with the way in which a congregation talks about finances in general. About half of the respondents reported that their clergy are unaware of how much is donated to the congregation and by whom, while 45 percent of respondents reported that their clergy is aware of these trends. This result is compared with the finding that 42 percent of congregational leaders are preaching slightly more or significantly more on the importance of charitable giving both inside and outside of the congregation than before the recession, while 52 percent are preaching about the same or less.

Financial Education

When asked about whether congregations offer specific courses, workshops, classes, or seminars on personal finance or charitable giving, 36 percent responded affirmatively. This is a relatively high percentage considering that historically few religious congregations have engaged in such activity.

Congregations' Use of Electronic Giving Tools

Two-thirds (66.3 percent) of responding congregations employ some type of electronic giving option for their congregants' offerings, tithes, dues, and other types of payments. Greater than 40 percent of respondents (43.6 percent) reported that their congregation receives direct deposit transfers from congregants and 29 percent receive checks or transfers from congregants' online bank accounts. Twelve percent of congregations receive contributions direct through the congregational website.

Effective Congregational Fundraising Is Not About Money, It's About:

- **Relationships:** Giving is personal to donors. Giving reflects a donor's interests and passions, commitment to the mission of the congregation, and trust in leadership.
- **Vision:** Clear and repeated articulation of vision helps supporters understand why generous giving is important. Does the congregation have a sense of tomorrow?
- **Trust:** True transparency about how money is received and how it is spent helps build assurance for supporters. Cultivate trust and confidence in supporters, so they can say: "I know what I give makes a difference and is important because I see it."
- **Faith Formation:** Generous giving reflects the donor's personal religious values and beliefs.

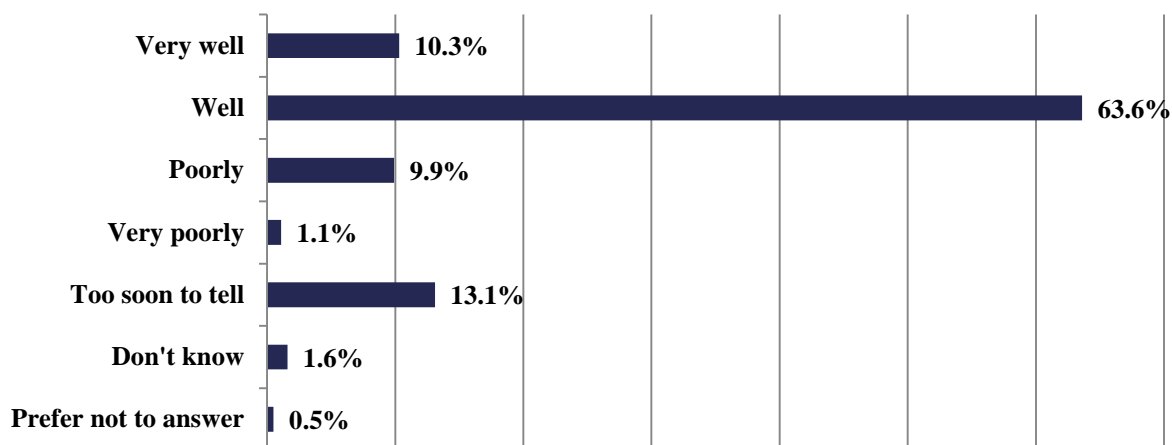
Section I: How Congregations Have Fared Since the Recession

How Congregations Felt They Weathered the Great Recession

When respondents were asked how they *feel* about how well their congregation weathered the economic recession, nearly three-quarters reported well or very well (see Figure 1). However, when reporting on the outcomes of actual revenues since the worst of the recession, while still the majority, a slightly lower percentage (65.5 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation's revenues have stayed the same or improved (see Figure 2). Moreover, when comparing post-recession revenues with inflation between the years 2007 and 2011, only 39 percent of respondents reported that their congregation's finances have stayed the same or increased compared with the rate of inflation (see Figure 3). As a result of the effect of the recession on revenues, about one-third (31.9 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation laid off at least one staff member (either full-time or part-time) between 2008 and 2011 (see Figure 4).

The majority of respondents reported that their respective congregations weathered the economic recession well or very well (73.9 percent), while 11 percent of respondents reported poorly or very poorly (see Figure 1). A relatively large proportion of respondents, at 13 percent, reported that it is still too soon to tell, indicating that recession-related financial challenges and changes continue within American congregations. There were no statistical differences across congregational types concerning how respondents felt their congregation weathered the recession.^{xx}

Figure 1: Percentage of Congregations Reporting on How They Felt They Weathered the Great Recession

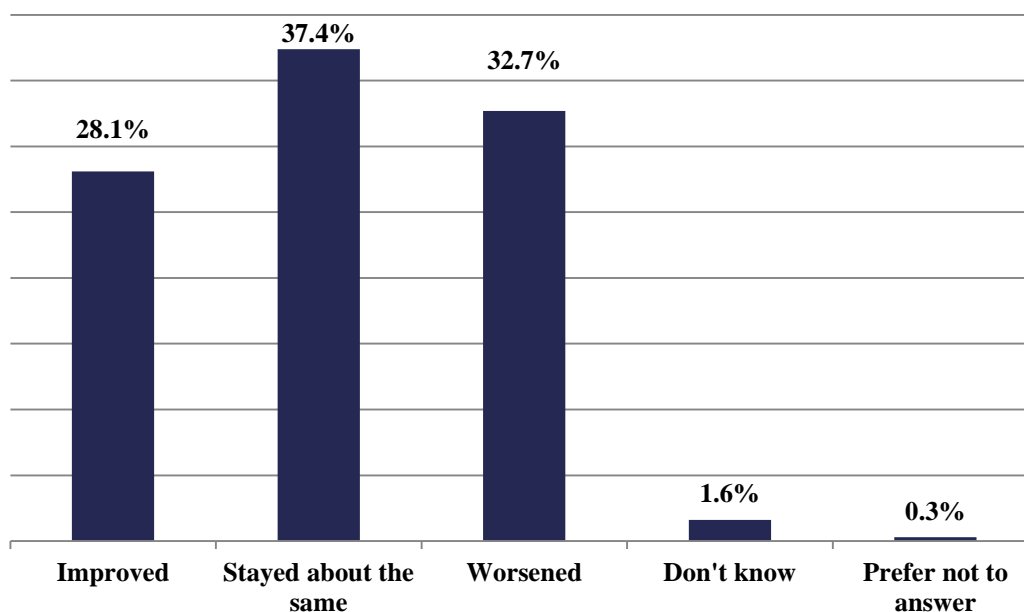


Financial and Demographic Changes

Changes in Congregational Finances Since the Worst of the Recession

When asked to report on the direction of change in congregational finances since the worst of the recession, the majority of respondents (65.5 percent) reported that congregational finances have either stayed the same or improved, while nearly a third (32.7 percent) reported that revenues have worsened. Congregations that are classified in the “other” category were the only type that saw an improvement in congregational finances since the worst of the recession, when compared to Evangelical Protestant congregations.^{xxi}

Figure 2: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Changes in Congregational Finances Since the Worst of the Recession

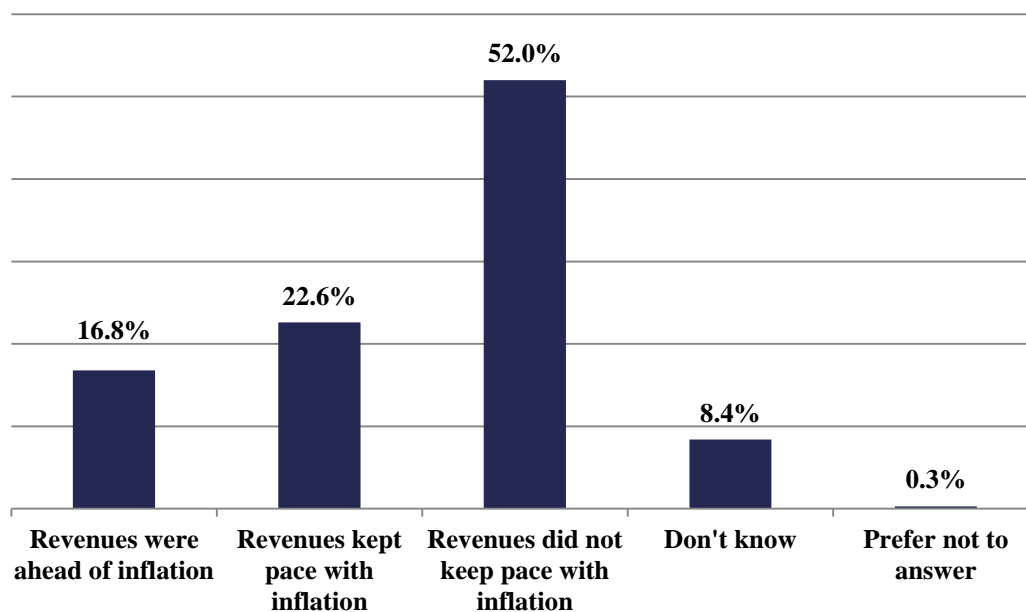


Changes in Revenues Between 2007 and 2011, Compared with Inflation

Inflation increased 8 percent between 2007 and 2011. Respondents were asked to report on changes in revenues between 2007 and 2011 in comparison to the change in inflation. Slightly more than half (52.0 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation's year-end revenues did not keep pace with inflation between the years 2007 and 2011. Together, 39 percent of respondents reported that revenues kept pace with inflation or were ahead of inflation.

Congregations with attendees who are, on average, 55 years and above were more likely to report that revenue growth lagged behind inflation when compared to congregations with the youngest attendees.^{xxii}

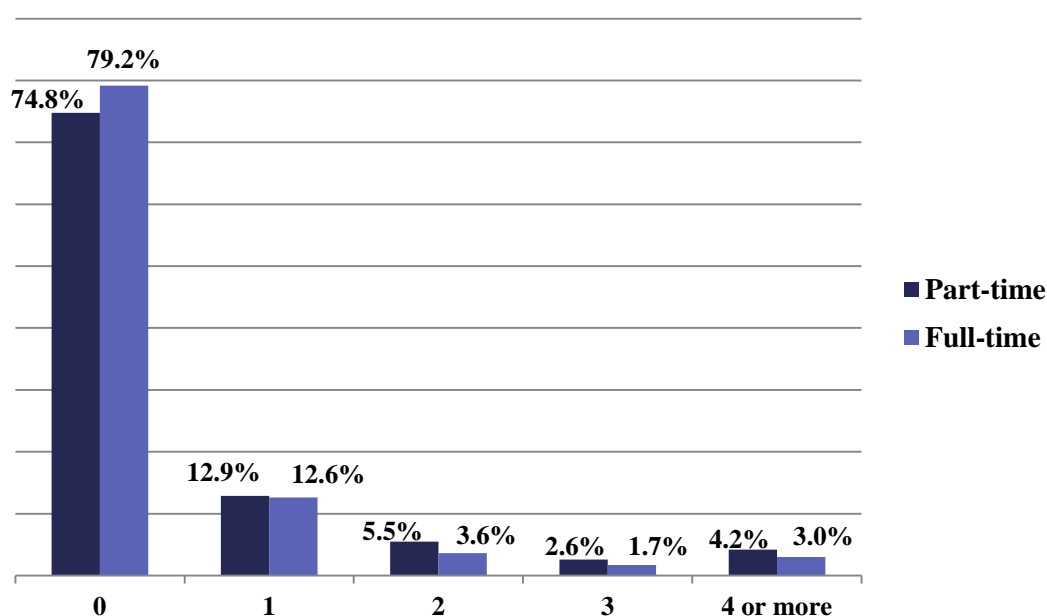
Figure 3: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Changes in Revenues Between 2007 and 2011, Compared with Inflation



Staff Reductions Between 2008 and 2011

Between 2008 and 2011, three-quarters of congregations reported no layoffs of full-time employees and 79 percent reported the same about part-time employees. Only about one in three (31.9 percent) congregations reduced staff, whether part-time or full-time.^{xxiii} Congregations were more likely to reduce staff by laying off part-time employees. Across all congregations, 13 percent reported laying off one part-time employee. Similarly, 13 percent reported laying off one full-time staff member.

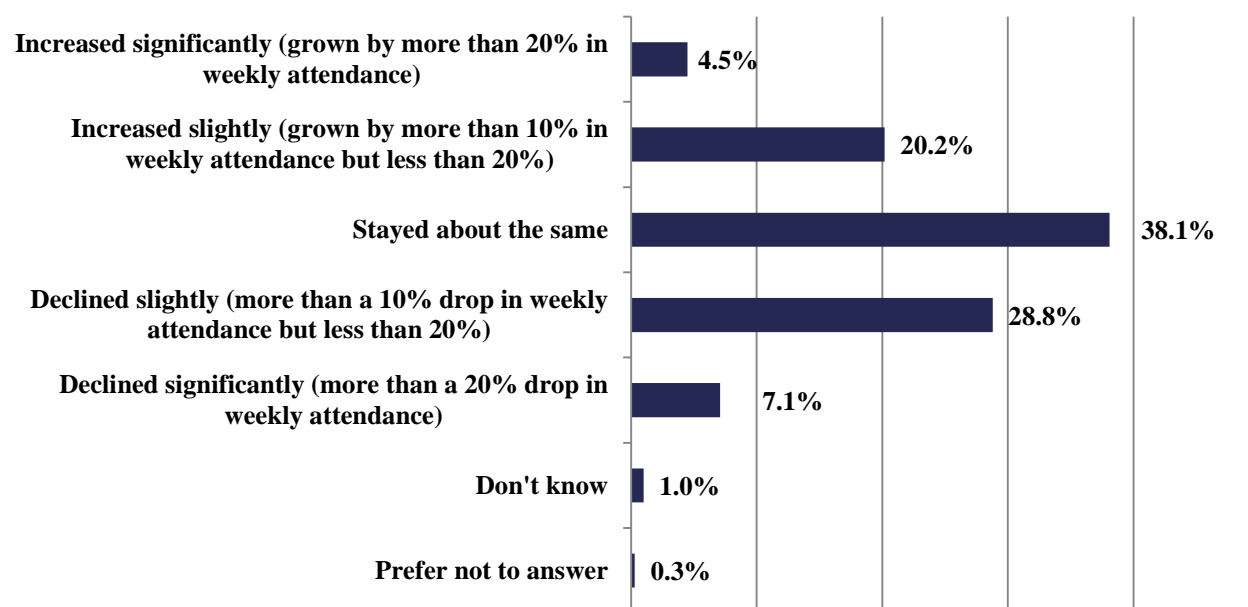
Figure 4: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Staff Reductions Between 2008 and 2011



Changes in Weekly Attendance Following the Recession

When asked about how weekly attendance rates have changed since the worst of the recession, a larger proportion of respondents (35.9 percent) reported that attendance in weekly services has declined than those who reported an increase (24.7 percent). Nevertheless, the highest proportion of respondents (38.1 percent) reported that attendance has stayed about the same in this time period.

Figure 5: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Changes in Weekly Attendance Following the Recession



How Congregations Responded to Their Communities and Congregants During and Following the Recession

Congregations responded to the recession in several ways. Many reported increasing community outreach and expanding programs. In this next section, we take an in-depth look into how congregations responded to the recession by examining their support for both community and congregants' needs, as well as how congregations emphasized charitable giving in preaching and teaching in the post-recession period. We also provide respondents' comments on lessons learned, in addition to their advice on confronting the challenges brought on by economic downturns.

Previous research has found that nearly half (45.4 percent) of congregations had some sort of social service, community development, or neighborhood organizing program during the 2006-2007 period.^{xxiv} During the post-recession period, congregations increased external mission programs and support for existing congregants. Some groups chose to increase support for both, while others prioritized one audience over another.

How Congregations Responded to Their Communities' Needs

Similar to earlier themes represented in the first series of this report, a common current theme in community support for congregations is supporting the community's basic needs. These activities include housing support, food donations, free meals, and donations of clothes. Some congregations set up food banks or community gardens to provide nutritional assistance. One respondent noted, "We now give all our Sunday plate collection to local organizations in need." Beyond the donation of food and clothing, congregations are helping to pay utilities, health insurance premiums, and gasoline for families through community support funds.

Some congregations emphasized education in their outreach activities. One responding congregation noted that it provides education programs to the community or donated school supplies to "less-blessed" children. Additionally, congregations reported offering prayer and emotional support for community members—especially for the unemployed.

Congregations are addressing unemployment by assisting in the job search process and providing "job training and resume service," as well as offering financial education programs. Other congregations are using internal "benevolence funds" to meet congregants' basic needs such as helping with "utility bills, rent, etc." The offering of these services was a similar theme found among responding congregations in the first wave of this study when respondents discussed how they were addressing congregants' needs during the recession.

Some responding congregations noted that they are offering pledge forgiveness by allowing congregants to donate less than originally promised. One respondent noted that "members of the

congregation were given the opportunity to rethink their pledges,” while another stated, “We’ve accepted that folks can’t give what they once could.”

When congregations cannot provide their members with material or financial assistance, they offer programs of counsel or care. One responding congregation noted that it is attending to congregants’ needs through “compassionate listening.” Another respondent explained that their congregation “sought to be an unanxious presence as members dealt with their own insecurities.”

Advice from the Field

Many respondents to this study offered helpful advice about what they have learned over these years following the recession concerning financial management, focus, communication, and other issues. The following is just a handful of the suggestions received:

- A common message was to trust in God to provide and to “keep the compassionate ministry” of God’s word. This was also a common theme expressed in the first series of this study.
- In dealing with the economic effects of the recession, respondents advocated a conservative approach. Those responding urged clergy to avoid debt and to adjust expenses to the economic times. One respondent suggested utilizing “a strong finance team” and “professional bookkeeping and audit controls,” while at the same time keeping the finances transparent to all congregants.
- Also serving as a form of internal assistance to congregants, some respondents suggested that other clergy offer “biblically based financial instruction” and “lessons on stewardship... in both good and bad economic times.” Continuing this theme of responsibility, other suggestions included, “preach and practice stewardship” and “teach a message of biblical generosity.” One respondent suggested another form of financial education: seminaries could “add classes on accounting and fundraising” to assist clergy-to-be in preparing for future economic trials.

Economic-Related Problems Impacting the Local Communities of Responding Congregations

How congregations fare financially in overall difficult economic times is the direct result of how economic hardship impacts local communities. The survey used in this study presented a list of continuing economic challenges facing local communities across the country, including mortgage foreclosures, unemployment, large-scale reductions in the workforce, and natural or manmade disasters. Many of these issues are direct ramifications of the Great Recession, while others are either short-term or long-term challenges unique to specific communities.

Ninety-four percent of respondents reported that their congregations were located in areas where unemployment impacted the local community at least somewhat, if not a great deal.

Almost three-quarters of respondents (72.5 percent) reported that mortgage foreclosures impacted their local communities at least somewhat, while over two-thirds (68.4 percent) reported that large-scale reductions in workforce or closures of companies affected their communities at least somewhat. Natural or manmade disasters affected the communities of one-fifth of responding congregations.

Despite the fact that 94 percent of responding congregations reported continued issues with unemployment within their communities, and over half reported that revenues are not keeping up with inflation, only one-fifth of responding congregations reported reductions in full-time staff since the worst of the recession.

Section II: Revenue Trends Among Congregations

Total Revenue

Respondents to this survey represented congregations with a range of total revenue in 2011. The majority of responding congregations (71.5 percent) had total revenue of below \$600,000 in 2011. Nearly 30 percent of responding congregations had total revenue between \$600,000 and \$5 million in 2011, while just less than 3 percent had revenue of \$5 million or greater.

The average amount of revenue received in 2011 across all responding congregations was \$858,500, and the median amount of revenue received was \$301,100.

Table 1: Congregational Total Revenue for 2011, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

Congregation's Total Revenue for 2011	Percent of Congregations
Less than \$150,000	22.0%
\$150,000 to \$299,999	25.9%
\$300,000 to \$599,999	23.6%
\$600,000 to \$999,999	11.2%
\$1,000,000 to \$4,999,999	14.8%
\$5,000,000 to \$9,999,999	1.30%
\$10,000,000 and up	1.20%

Total Revenue Breakdown

Almost all congregations received revenue through tithes, offerings, and/or pledge fulfillments in 2011.^{xxv} For those congregations that received these sources of revenue, the average percent of revenue raised was 76 percent, while the median percent of revenue raised from these sources was 80 percent.

The majority of congregations also reported the receipt of special offerings (80.8 percent) and consolidated earned income (59.2 percent) in 2011. Congregations that received these types of revenue brought in an average of 9 percent and 11 percent, respectively, from these sources.

Twenty-nine percent of respondents reported that their congregation received revenue from bequests in 2011. These congregations brought in an average total of 8 percent of revenue from bequests. Nearly a quarter (24.5 percent) of respondents reported “other” sources of revenue.^{xxvi}

Table 2: Breakdown of Congregational Revenue for 2011

Revenue Source	Receive Revenue From This Source (%)	Average % of Revenue Raised From this Source*	Median % of Revenue Raised From This Source*
Tithes/offerings/pledge fulfillments	99.5%	75.6%	80.0%
Special offerings	80.8%	9.1%	7.0%
Capital campaigns	37.2%	12.1%	10.0%
Bequests	29.0%	7.6%	5.0%
Consolidated earned income	59.2%	11.3%	5.0%
Corporate and foundation gifts and grants	10.5%	7.6%	5.0%
Other	24.5%	12.4%	8.0%

*These percentages reference the proportions of revenue congregations received from stated the source in the first column. Each percentage figure references only those congregations that received any amount from that source and does not include congregations that did not receive revenue from the stated source.

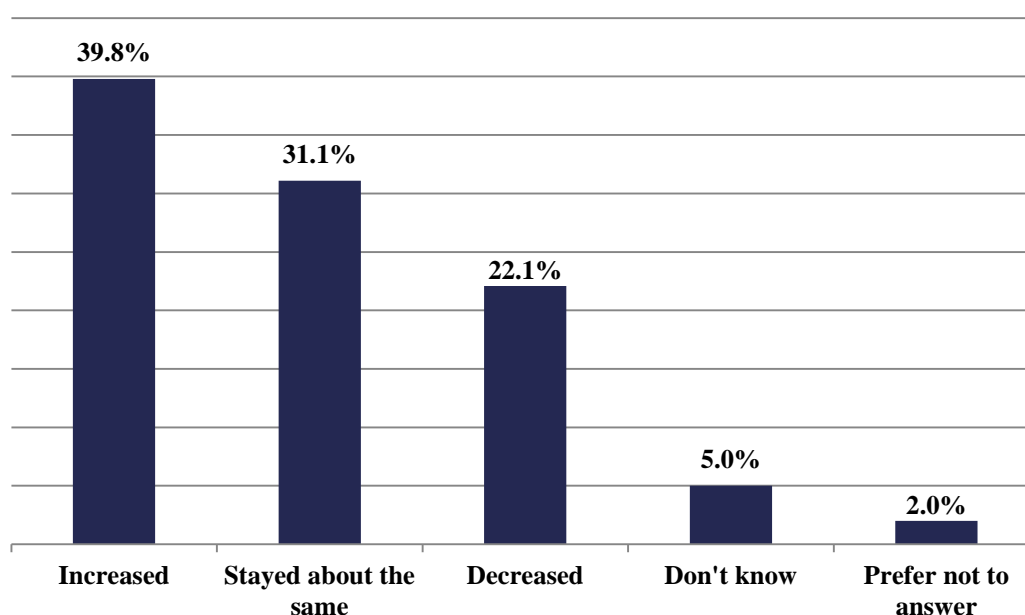
Pledges

Respondents' Beliefs About Changes in Pledges and Dues Payments Received, 2010 Compared with 2011

Nearly three-quarters (72.2 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation has an annual stewardship or pledge campaign.^{xxvii} Mainline Protestant, Catholic, and congregations that are classified as “other” are more likely to have an annual pledge campaign than Evangelical Protestant congregations.^{xxviii}

The highest percentage of respondents, at 40 percent, reported that they *believed* their congregation's overall pledges or dues payments received had increased between 2010 and 2011. Nearly a third reported that they believed pledges and dues payments received stayed about the same during this period, while 22 percent reported a decline.

Figure 6: Percentage of Congregations Reporting a Change in Overall Pledges or Dues Payments Received Between 2010 and 2011[†]



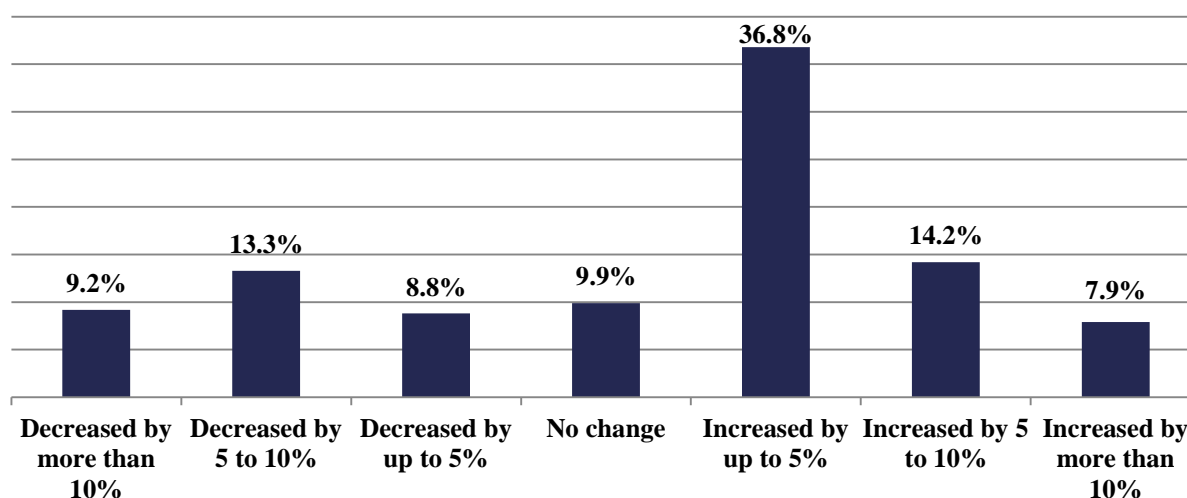
[†]Note that the survey question related to Figure 6 asked respondents to report what they believed about the change in overall pledges or dues payments received between 2010 and 2011, while the survey question related to Figure 7 asked about actual changes in overall pledges or dues payments received between these years.

Actual Changes in Pledges and Dues Payments Received, 2010 Compared with 2011

Even though half of the congregations' revenues did not keep pace with inflation between 2007 and 2011, growth in the actual number of pledges and dues payments received between 2010 and 2011 shows some promise of a brighter future for congregations. With this question, 59 percent of respondents reported that their congregation's overall pledges or dues payments increased. The greatest percentage of respondents reported an increase up to 5 percent (36.8 percent). Nearly a third (31.3 percent) of congregations reported declines in pledges or dues payments received.

Mainline Protestant and denominations classified as "other" were more likely to realize an increase in pledges or dues payments than Evangelical Protestant congregations in 2011 compared with 2010.^{xxix} Congregations with an average age of attendees 55 years and older were less likely than congregations with the youngest participants to realize an increase in pledges or dues payments in 2011 compared with 2010.^{xxx}

Figure 7: Percentage Change in Congregations' Overall Pledges or Dues Payments Received Between 2010 and 2011[†]



[†]Note that the survey question related to Figure 6 asked respondents to report what they believed about the change in overall pledges or dues payments received between 2010 and 2011, while the survey question related to Figure 7 asked about actual changes in overall pledges or dues payments received between these years.

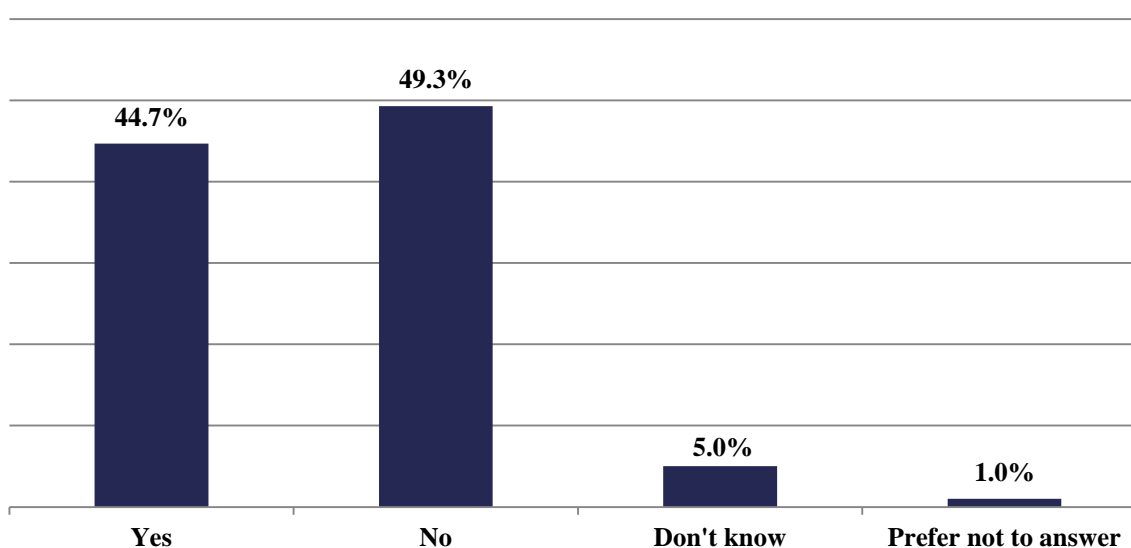
Clergy's Awareness About Contributions Received

Results show that about half (49.3 percent) of the respondents reported that their congregation's clergy are unaware of how much is donated to the congregation and by whom. Just 45 percent of congregations are led by clergy who are aware of what their congregations receive and from whom.

Compare this finding with the results shown in Figure 13, wherein respondents reported that 52 percent of their congregation's leadership has preached and/or talked about the importance of charitable giving to congregants about the same or less than before the recession. Further, results in Figure 14 show that almost two-thirds (62.9 percent) of congregations offer no seminars or formal instruction on financial management or charitable giving. This may indicate that if clergy were more aware of their congregation's revenue, more preaching or formal seminars and instruction might be offered as part of their ministry.

Congregations in which clergy are actively aware of the giving trends within their congregation were more likely to see positive fundraising results between the first half of 2011 and the first half of 2012. In addition, congregations in which respondents reported that clergy are not aware of how much their congregation gives, or who gives, were less likely to report having an endowment than those whose clergy were aware of this information.^{xxxi}

Figure 8: Percentage of Congregations Reporting on Clergy's Awareness of Contributions Received



Congregational Best Practices for Building a Solid Financial Base

In terms of finances and giving, congregations often either think in terms of practicing a theology either based on abundance or on scarcity. We can relate this to the expression “seeing the glass half full” versus the expression “seeing the glass half empty.” How congregational leaders see, perceive, and approach their finances depends on their theological perspectives, but such perspectives need not be cast in stone.

Lake Institute on Faith & Giving suggests that congregations take a realistic look at their finances, while at the same time practicing a theology based on abundance rather than scarcity. A realistic sense of what a congregation’s coffers hold, mixed with a healthy dose of optimism, is likely to promote active engagement with supporters and donors and to cultivate an attitude toward generosity.

Other suggestions for healthy financial management within congregations from Lake Institute on Faith & Giving include:

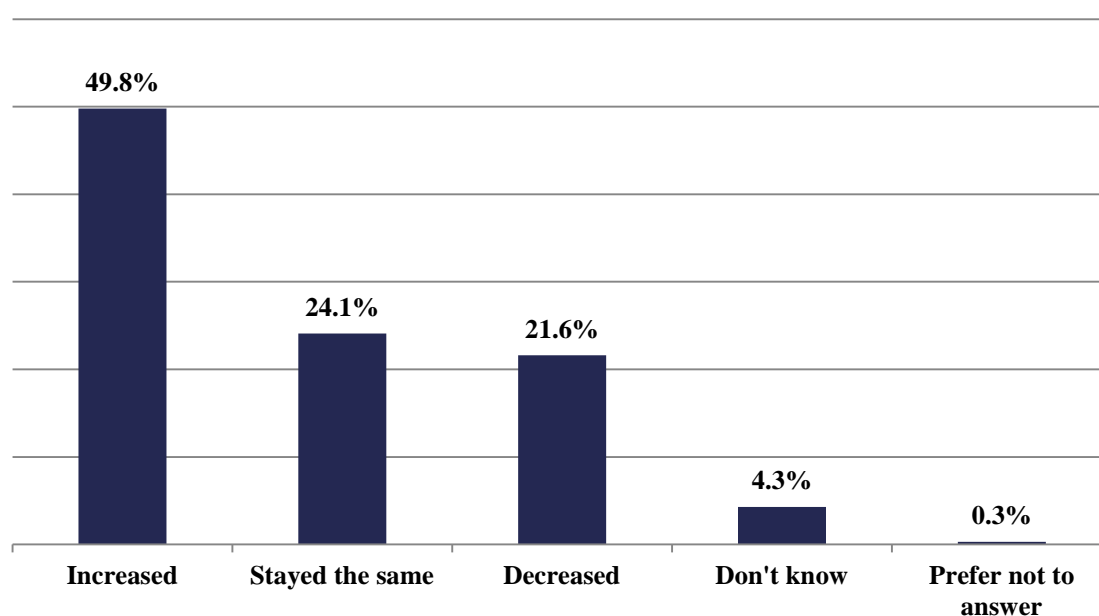
- **Engage** in donor-centered fundraising by addressing the spiritual aspirations of different audiences
- **Focus** on transformational, not transactional, giving
- **Diversify** income streams
- **Establish** a *Legacy Movement*: Engage leaders, staff, and congregants in financial education programs that are personalized for each congregation and address the needs and interests of the different generations of the congregation
- **Redefine** pastoral care to include the care for members and donors who see their giving as a spiritual practice
- **Encourage** pastors and other staff to engage members in personal conversation, exploring ways in which generous giving enhances the ministry they share together as laity and clergy
- **Rethink** standard rituals and practice around giving

Section III: Fundraising-Stewardship Initiatives

Respondents' Beliefs about Changes in Fundraising Receipts, 2010 Compared with 2011

The highest percentage of respondents, at 50 percent, reported that they believed their congregation's fundraising receipts had increased between 2010 and 2011. Nearly a quarter (24.1 percent) reported that they believed fundraising receipts stayed about the same during this period, while 22 percent reported a decline. Results from the first wave of this study on fundraising receipts were quite similar, showing that almost half (49.4 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation's fundraising receipts increased between 2007 and 2008, while 22 percent reported that these values decreased.

Figure 9: Percentage of Congregations Reporting a Change in Overall Fundraising Receipts Between 2010 and 2011[†]



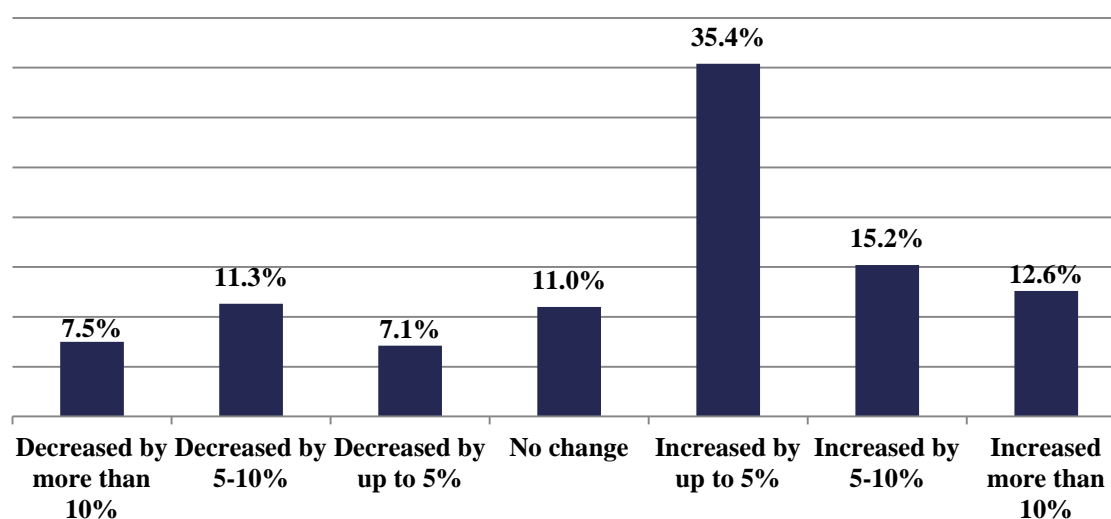
[†] Note that the survey question related to Figure 9 asked respondents to report what they believed about the change in fundraising receipts received between 2010 and 2011, while the survey question related to Figure 10 asked about actual changes in fundraising receipts received between these years.

Actual Changes in Fundraising Receipts, 2010 Compared with 2011

Nearly three-quarters (63.2 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation realized an increase in fundraising receipts between 2010 and 2011, with the greatest percentage (35.4 percent) reporting that receipts went up no more than 5 percent. Slightly more than a quarter (25.9 percent) of congregations reported that fundraising receipts declined in this time period, with 11 percent of respondents reporting declines between 5 percent and 10 percent.

Congregations with a younger average age of attendees were more likely to see an increase in fundraising receipts than congregations with older attendees,^{xxxii} as did Mainline Protestants and “other” denominations compared to Evangelical Protestants.^{xxxiii}

Figure 10: Percentage Change in Congregations’ Fundraising Receipts Between 2010 and 2011[†]



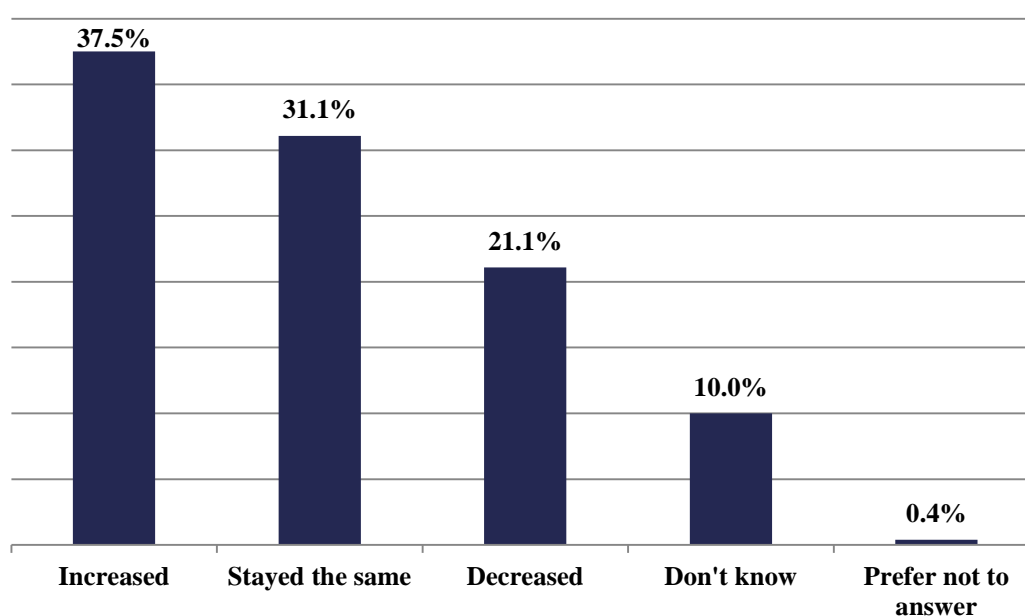
[†] Note that the survey question related to Figure 9 asked respondents to report what they believed about the change in fundraising receipts received between 2010 and 2011, while the survey question related to Figure 10 asked about actual changes in fundraising receipts received between these years.

Changes in Fundraising Receipts, 2011 Compared with 2012

When asked about changes in fundraising receipts between the first half of 2011 and the first half of 2012, the greatest proportion (37.5 percent) of respondents reported that fundraising receipts increased. Nearly a third (31.1 percent) of respondents indicated that fundraising receipts in this time period stayed the same, while 21 percent of respondents reported declines.

Congregations in which clergy are actively aware of the giving trends within their congregation were more likely to see positive fundraising results between the first half of 2011 and the first half of 2012.^{xxxiv} Congregations with a younger average age of attendees were more likely to see increases in fundraising receipts in this time period than congregations with older attendees.^{xxxv}

Figure 11: Percentage of Congregations Reporting a Change in Fundraising Receipts for the First Half of 2012 Compared with the First Half of 2011



Factors in Growth or Decline in Fundraising Results

A congregation's attendance rate and membership base, as well as its ability to raise giving levels, appear to be driving revenue in today's congregations. Of those congregations that experienced an increase in fundraising results between 2010 and 2011, the highest percentages of respondents reported that higher average gifts (53.7 percent) and a greater number of donors (41.9 percent) accounted for the increase. Those citing "other" reasons for increases in fundraising results in 2011 reported the following reasons: pledge accountability, improved capital campaigns, and more direct personal requests for donations.

By comparison, of those respondents who reported a decline in fundraising results between 2010 and 2011, the highest percentages reported that fewer donors (69.0 percent) and lower average gifts (47.8 percent) attributed to the decline. Unfulfilled pledges were cited by a quarter of respondents as a factor in the decline in fundraising receipts in 2011. Those citing "other" reasons for decreases in fundraising results in 2011 reported the following reasons: deaths, lower attendance, the economy, large bequests in 2010, and worsening relationships between the congregation and clergy or internal schisms that split the congregation itself.

Table 3: Factors Respondents Attributed to Increases and Decreases in 2011 Fundraising Results, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

Among those reporting an increase in fundraising:	Percent
Higher average gifts	53.7%
More donors	41.9%
Other	23.6%
Unexpected bequest or estate gifts	16.2%
Unexpected cash gifts	15.4%
Expected bequest or estate gifts	2.6%
Among those reporting a decrease in fundraising:	Percent
Fewer donors	69.0%
Lower average gifts	47.8%
Other	25.8%
Unfulfilled pledges	24.6%
Unexpected loss of large gift	14.8%

Fundraising Activities and Initiatives

A key factor in any organization's fundraising success is creating new or special fundraising campaigns, programs, or initiatives that align with constituents' interests. According to the Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, diversification of fundraising opportunities that appeal to the different audiences that comprise congregations is essential for fundraising success. In the survey, respondents were asked to report whether their congregation implemented new fundraising activities or initiatives in 2011 compared with 2010. A much lower percentage of congregations reported having implemented new fundraising activities or initiatives in 2011 than did not—27 percent compared with 69 percent. Mainline Protestant denominations and those classified in the “other” category were more likely to report having done so than Evangelical Protestant congregations.^{xxxvi}

Section IV: Bequests, Estate Gifts, and Endowments

Only about one-third (32.2 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation received at least one bequest in 2011. Among those congregations that received at least one bequest, half received just one (51.0 percent) and 27 percent received two. For those congregations that received any bequest in 2011, the average total dollar amount was nearly \$108,000 and the median was about \$22,500. Catholic and Mainline Protestant congregations were more likely to report having received at least one bequest in 2011 than Evangelical Protestant congregations. Table 4 shows the percentage of responding congregations that received at least one bequest in 2011, percentage rankings on the number of bequests received, and percentage rankings for the value of bequests.

Table 4: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Bequests Received in 2011

Congregations Receiving At Least One Bequest		Percent
Yes		32.2%
No		67.8%
Of Those Congregations Receiving At Least One Bequest, Number Received		Percent
1		51.0%
2		27.2%
3		10.5%
4 or more		11.3%
Total Value of Bequests Received in Congregations Receiving At Least One Bequest		Percent
\$1-\$1,000		6.2%
\$1001-\$10,000		30.5%
\$10,001-\$50,000		35.0%
\$50,001-\$100,000		12.3%
\$101,000 or more		16.0%

Congregational Endowments

Just over half (52.7 percent) of responding congregations have an endowment, according to survey respondents. This is close to the percentage of congregations reporting having endowments in the 2006-2007 wave of the National Congregations Survey (NCSWII), at 57 percent.^{xxxvii} In this study, one-quarter of respondents reported that their congregation's operating budget relies on the endowment, with nearly one third (32.2 percent) of congregations in this group allocating 2 percent to 5 percent of the congregation's operating budget to the endowment. For all congregations that rely on the endowment for their budget, at least in part, the average percent of reliance is 14 percent and the median is 8 percent.

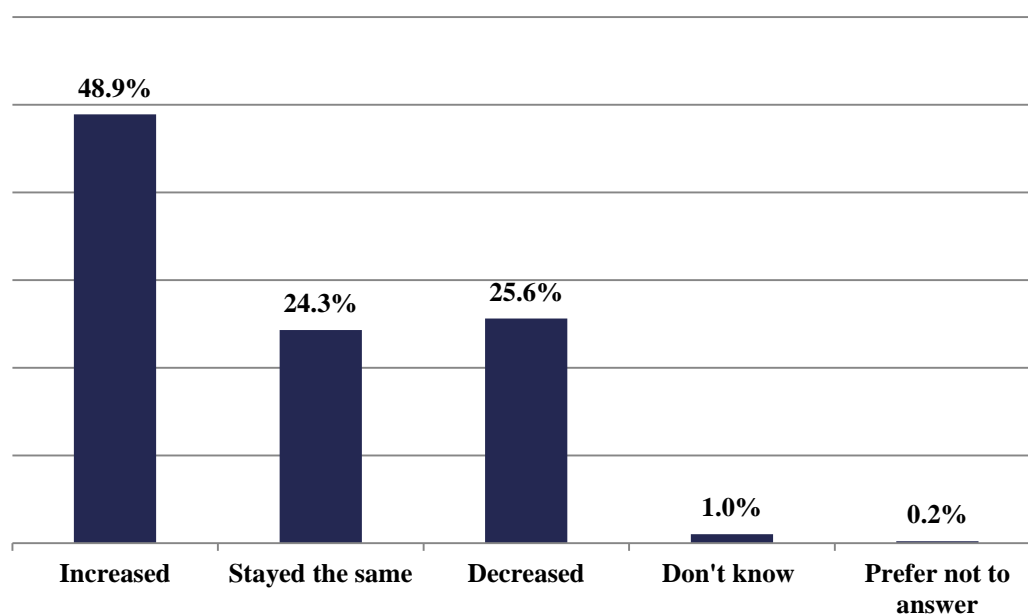
Mainline Protestant, Jewish, and denominations classified as "other" were found to be more likely than Evangelical Protestant congregations to have an endowment.^{xxxviii} Congregations in which respondents reported that clergy are not aware of how much their congregation gives, or who gives, were less likely to report having an endowment than those whose clergy were aware of this information.

Section V: Congregational Budgeting

Changes in Congregational Budgets for 2012, Compared with 2011

When asked to provide changes in the congregational budget between 2011 and 2012, almost half (48.9 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation's budget increased between 2011 and 2012. This was a seven percentage-point increase from those reporting on the change in congregational budgets between 2008 and 2009 in the first wave of this study. Roughly the same percentage of budgets decreased (25.6 percent) as stayed the same (24.3 percent) in 2012. In the first wave of this study, 34 percent of responding congregations reported declines in their budget for the year 2009.

Figure 12: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Changes in the Budget for 2012, Compared with 2011[†]



[†] Note: 67 percent of all responding congregations made at least one adjustment to their budget for 2012, whether negative or positive. These percentages reflect only those congregations that made any budget allocation.

Budget Allocation Adjustments for 2012, Compared with 2011

Respondents were asked to report on budget allocation adjustments for the year 2011 compared to 2012. Congregations' 2012 budgets emphasized an external focus, with congregations tending to cut back on internal programs (33.4 percent), building maintenance (34.7 percent), and staffing (25.6 percent), while increasing support for outreach programs (23.0 percent), mission activities (18.6 percent), and revenue-generating activities (18.7 percent). Nevertheless, if a congregation made an increase, the greatest percentage (34.2 percent) made increases in salaries.

Table 5: Percentage of Congregations Reporting Budget Allocation Adjustments for 2012, Compared with 2011[†]

Budget Allocation Adjustments	Percent of Congregations Making Increases	Percent of Congregations Making Reductions
Salaries	34.2%	13.2%
Outreach programs	23.0%	11.7%
Revenue-generating activities	18.7%	3.8%
Missions activities	18.6%	11.6%
Internal programs	16.7%	33.4%
Charitable organization support	16.2%	20.3%
Staffing	15.5%	25.6%
Building maintenance	14.5%	34.7%
Employee benefits	9.3%	9.5%
Brick-and-mortar projects	9.1%	16.3%
Congregational assets	3.5%	4.1%

[†] Note: 67 percent of all responding congregations made at least one adjustment to their budget for 2012, whether negative or positive. These percentages reflect only those congregations that made any budget allocations.

Staffing

The greatest percentages of congregations employ four or more part-time staff members (52.1 percent) and one full-time staff member (37.8 percent). A strong proportion of congregations employ four or more full-time staff, at nearly 30 percent. Slightly less than 6 percent of congregations employ no full-time employees, and 5 percent employ no part-time employees.

By comparison, the first wave of this study revealed a smaller percentage of congregations employing zero staff—2.2 percent (part-time) and 3.3 percent (full-time) for the year 2008. In addition, between the two studies, there has been a decrease in staffing for those congregations employing four or more part-time staff of about 3 percentage points. These points indicate, perhaps, trends in declining congregational staffing overall. Indeed, as results reveal in Figure 4, between 2008 and 2011, about one in three (31.9 percent) congregations reduced staff, whether part-time or full-time.

Table 6: Paid Congregational Staff Employed in 2011, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

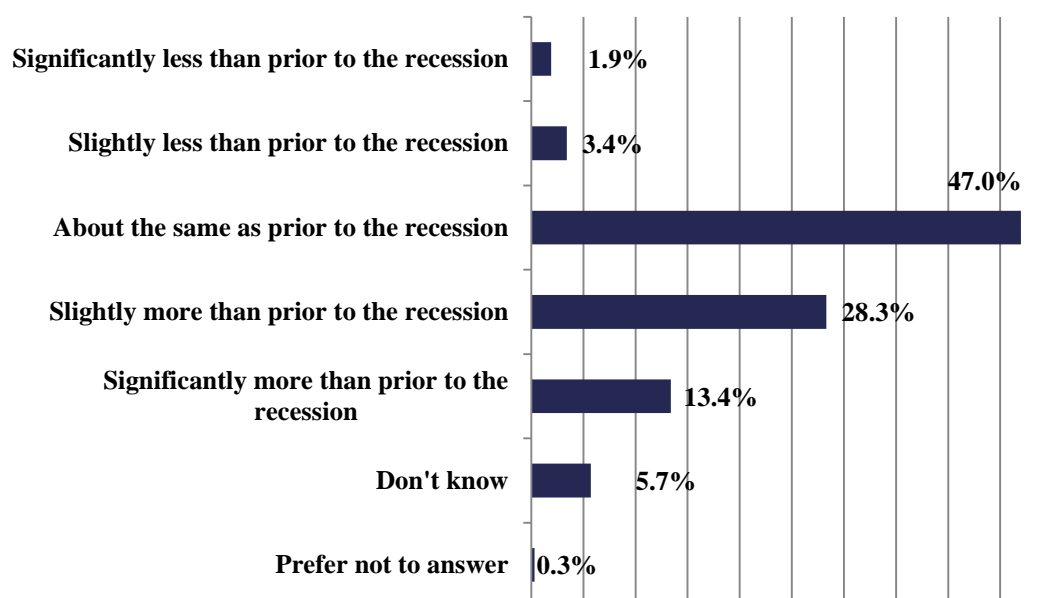
Number of Employees	Part-time	Full-time
0	5.2%	5.8%
1	10.6%	37.8%
2	13.9%	15.9%
3	18.2%	10.6%
4 or more	52.1%	29.8%

Section VI: Financial Education

Changes in Congregations' Approaches to Philanthropic Education in Recent Years

When asked if congregational leadership preaches or talks about the importance of charitable giving, whether inside or outside of the congregation, the greatest proportion (47.0 percent) of respondents reported that leadership is engaging in such activity at the same rate as prior to the recession. Nevertheless, if there was any change in this type of activity, more respondents reported that leadership is preaching more (41.7 percent) rather than less (5.3 percent) as a result of the economic downturn.

Figure 13: Changes in Congregations' Approaches to Philanthropic Education in Recent Years, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

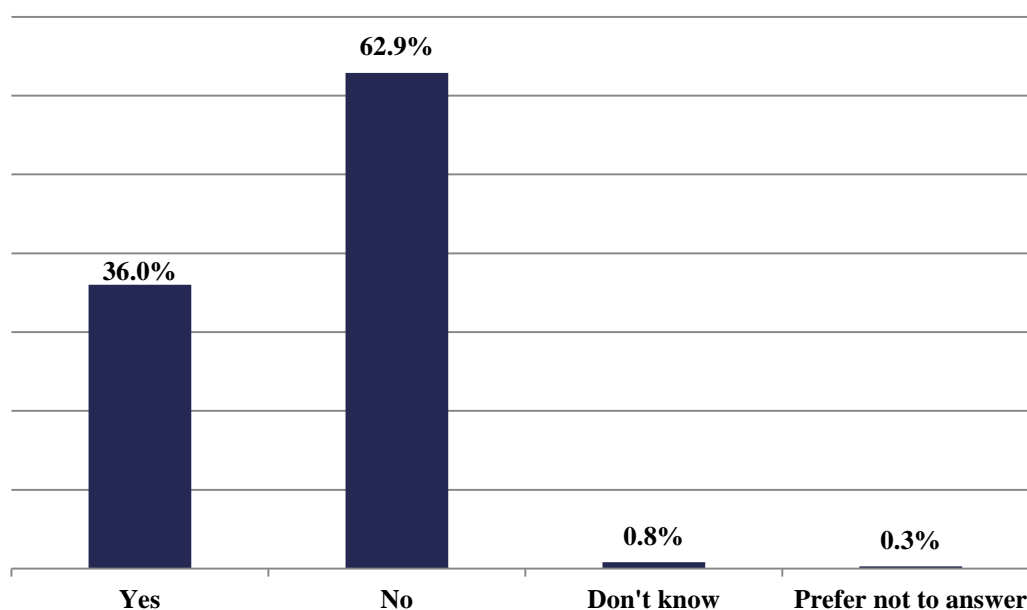


Congregational Offerings of Courses, Workshops, Classes, or Seminars on Personal Finance or Charitable Giving

The survey asked respondents whether their congregation offers specific courses, workshops, classes, or seminars on personal finance or charitable giving for their congregants. Thirty-six percent of respondents reported that they do.^{xl} However, the majority (62.9 percent) do not.

Responding Evangelical Protestant congregations were found to be statistically significantly more likely to offer financial or charitable giving courses than were Mainline Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and denominations classified in the “other” category.^{xli} In addition, congregations with an average age of attendees 65 years and above were less likely to offer financial or charitable giving courses than congregations with the youngest average age of attendees.^{xlii}

Figure 14: Congregational Offerings of Courses, Workshops, Classes, or Seminars on Personal Finance or Charitable Giving, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

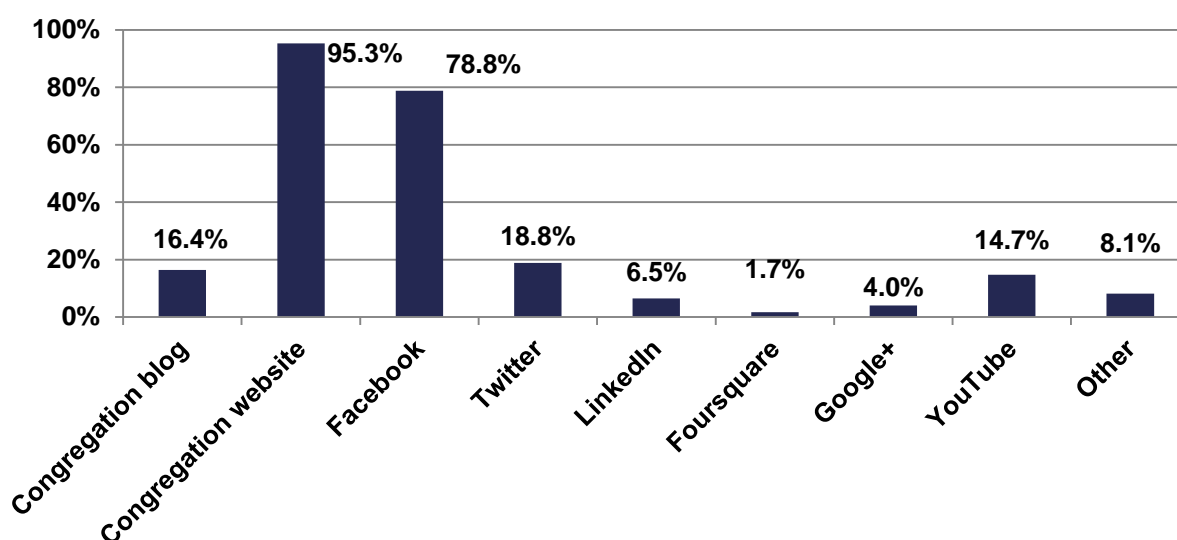


Section VII: Congregations' Use of Electronic Tools for Marketing and Communication

Religiously active Americans are slightly more technologically engaged than the general population.^{xliii} According to a Pew Research Center study, 80 percent of religiously active Americans use the internet (compared with 75 percent of the general population) and 75 percent use email (compared with 68 percent of the general population). In addition, nearly half (46 percent) use social media, such as Facebook, and 9 percent use Twitter. Nearly half of religious Americans cite the internet as highly impactful in keeping up with their organization or other activities, according to the Pew study. About a third or more of religiously engaged Americans find the internet highly influential in organizing activities or finding groups. Nearly 40 percent cite that the internet has some impact on their charitable giving to groups.^{xliv}

The NCSWII reveals that as of the period 2006-2007, 44 percent of congregations had a website, and that 59 percent used email to communicate with congregants.^{xlv} In this study, when asked if their congregation has a website or engages in online activity, the vast majority of respondents (94.4 percent) answered in the affirmative. Among those congregations that have a website or engage in online activity, the most popular online tool cited for engaging with those outside and inside of the congregation was the congregation's website (95.3 percent), while the second-most popular option cited was Facebook (78.8 percent). Other types of social media and online tools that congregations reported include: emails and electronic newsletters; text messaging; congregational online communities like Church Community Builder, The City, and The Table; and additional media platforms like live-streamed sermons, Pinterest, and Vimeo.

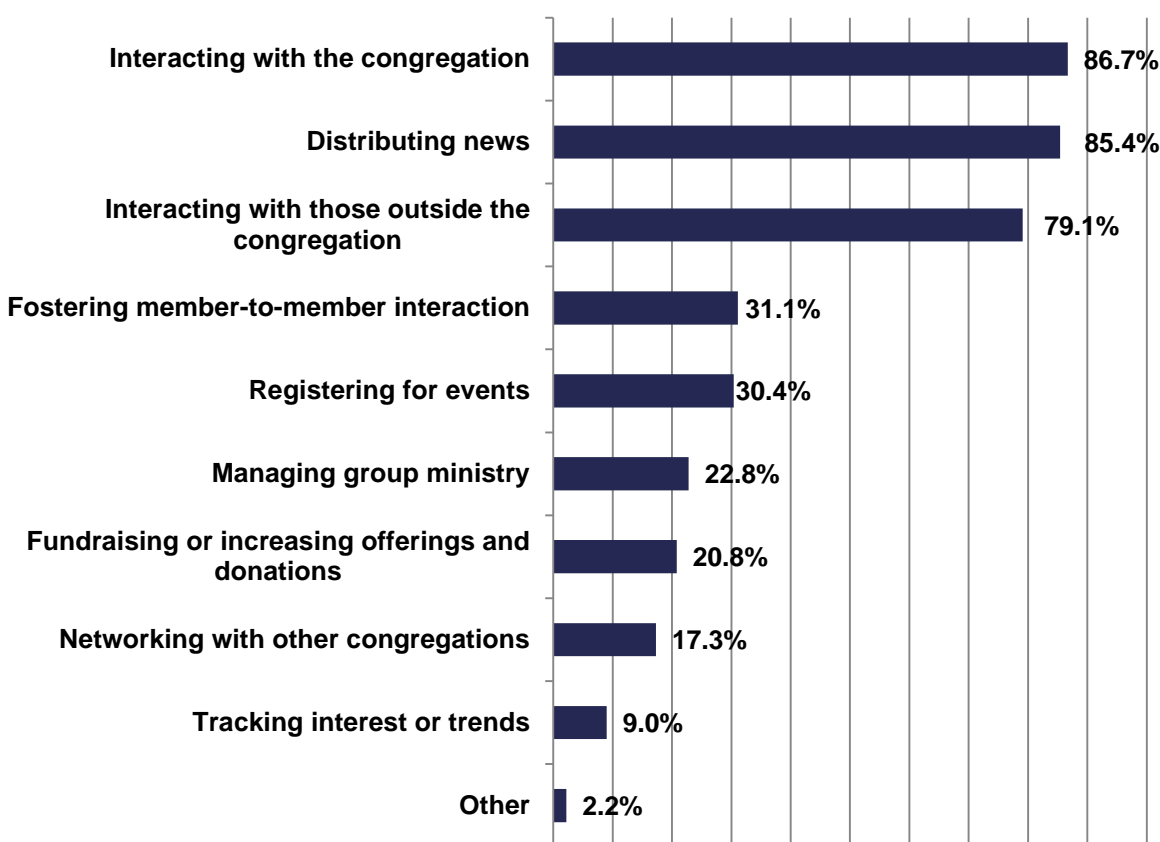
Figure 15: Percentage of Congregations Using Social Media and Online Tools



Congregations' Purposes for Using Social Media

Ninety-two percent of respondents reported that their congregation uses social media. When asked about the purposes for which these congregations use social media, most cited interacting with those inside the congregation (86.7 percent), distributing news (85.4 percent), and interacting with those outside of the congregation (79.1 percent). Other reasons that these congregations use social media include fostering member-to-member interaction (31.1 percent), event registration (30.4 percent), and managing group ministry (22.8 percent). Only one-fifth (20.8 percent) use social media to fundraise or solicit offerings. Only one-fifth (20.8 percent) use social media to fundraise or solicit offerings.

Figure 16: Congregations' Purposes for Using Social Media, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting[†]



[†]This data reflects only those respondents that reported their congregation uses social media tools at all.

In order to operate an effective fundraising program, congregations must be transparent and hospitable, as well as have the appropriate level of administrative and leadership capacity

According to Lake Institute on Faith & Giving, congregations must demonstrate that they are worthy of receiving gifts from their members by demonstrating transparency and hospitality, as well as ensuring they have the capacity to effectively steward gifts of all sizes. To this point, Rebekah Basinger (2008) writes, “Trustees must address two key issues: the readiness of the board to provide the kind of leadership a [congregation] deserves and the worthiness of the [congregation] to receive the good will and gifts it desires.”^{xlvi}

In addition, Brian Kluth of MAXIMUM Generosity succinctly provides the following “5 Keys to Generous Giving”:

Instruct through scripture
Influence through resources
Involve through systems
Inspire through stories
Ignite through vision

Section VIII: Giving Methods

Respondents were asked to report on the types of giving payments received by their congregation. Nearly 100 percent, unsurprisingly, receive cash and checks. Greater than 40 percent of respondents (43.6 percent) reported that their congregation receives direct deposit transfers from congregants, 31 percent receive stocks, bonds, or other financial instruments, and 29 percent receive checks or transfers from congregants' online bank accounts.

When asked to report on the average percent of congregational revenue received through these various sources of payments, congregations were most likely to report the greatest amount of their revenue comes through check payments or "other" sources. Nearly three-fourths (72.6 percent) of congregations' revenue is paid by check.^{xlvi}

Over two-thirds (66.3 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation employs some form of electronic giving.^{xlvi} Beyond direct deposit, credit and debit cards, and online banking, some respondents reported that congregants use PayPal and kiosks located inside houses of worship to make payments.

Table 7: Revenue Breakdown by Source of Payment

Sources of Congregational Revenue	Percentage of Congregations Using Source of Giving*	Average Percent of Congregational Revenue from Source*
Checks	98.1%	72.6%
Cash	96.3%	14.7%
Direct deposit transfer	43.6%	13.1%
Stocks, bonds, or other financial instruments	30.6%	6.9%
Online banking through personal account	29.4%	8.0%
Credit or debit cards	18.2%	10.3%
Online banking through church's website	12.5%	6.7%
In-kind (including real estate)	5.4%	4.5%
Other	5.3%	28.0%
Precious metals or jewels	0.6%	11.4%

*These percentages reference the proportions of revenue congregations received from stated the source in the first column. Each percentage figure references only those congregations that received any amount from that source and does not include congregations that did not receive revenue from the stated source.

Section VIII: Demographics

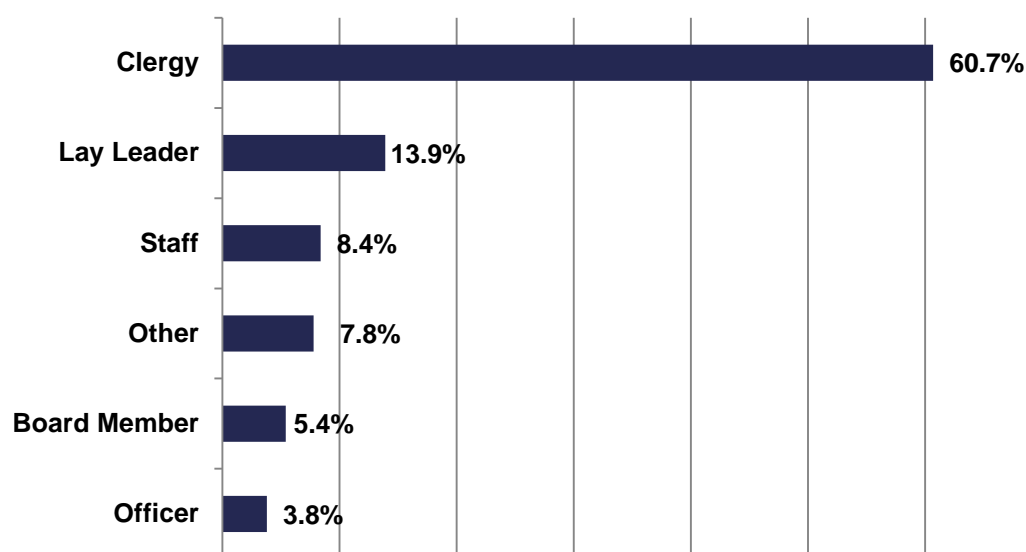
In this section, we present the demographic characteristics of those congregations that responded to our study on which the previous percentages are based. These demographic data include, by percentage reporting: congregational role; denomination type; year of establishment of congregation; geography; average age of congregants; average income of congregants; and weekly attendance rates. These results are representative of the constituents who responded to the survey and not the U.S. congregational landscape at large. When appropriate, we report the most up-to-date data on demographic trends in U.S. congregational life to provide context for the research data found herein.

We also asked respondents to report on the extent to which economic problems continue to affect congregations' communities and provide the results in this section.

Congregational Role of Respondents

Clergy and laity may have two different perspectives on congregational finances and related activities. Gathering responses from these different perspectives is informative in gauging clergy's and laity's awareness of not only the administrative aspect of congregations, but also that of congregational life. For this study, 61 percent of the respondents were clergy, followed by 14 percent who are considered lay leaders. Of those who classified themselves as being in an "other" position, respondents reported being retired or non-staff clergy, finance officers (e.g., stewardship co-chair, trustee, treasurer or warden), church consultants or business administrators, or spouses of the clergy or pastor.

Figure 17: Percentage of Congregations Reporting, by Congregational Role



Responding Congregations' Denomination Types

The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life estimates that within the United States, 78 percent of the population is Christian, followed by 16 percent who are unaffiliated.^{xlix} Of the Christian denominations, 51 percent of Americans are Protestant, including 26 percent who are Evangelical, 18 percent who are Mainline, and 7 percent who are Historically Black. After Protestant denominations, Catholic denominations comprise 24 percent of the population. Those who are unaffiliated make up 16 percent of the population, which include those who are atheist (1.6 percent), agnostic (2.4 percent), and “other” (12.1 percent). Five percent of the population includes those of other faiths, such as Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, New Age, and others.

In this study, the greatest percentage of respondents is derived from Mainline Protestant denominations at 61 percent. Evangelical Protestant denominations comprised a quarter of respondents, followed by those who are classified as “other” at 9 percent. Congregations classified as “other” were most likely to be Unitarian Universalist, other Christian faiths, or other non-Christian faiths, such as New Thought. Two percent of the respondents were Jewish congregations, and Catholics and Historically Black Protestant congregations each comprised about one percent of the respondent pool. Table 8 shows the percentage of respondents by denomination type.

Table 8: Percentage of Congregations Reporting by Denomination Type

Denomination	Percent
Mainline Protestant	60.8%
Evangelical Protestant	24.9%
Other	9.2%
Jewish	2.4%
Catholic	1.1%
Prefer Not to Say/Not Selected	1.1%
Historically Black Protestant	0.6%

Year of Establishment of Responding Congregations

Data from the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study (NCSWII) show that as of 2006-2007, the median founding date of a congregation is 1944.¹ In this study, the highest percentage, at over one-third (37.1 percent) of congregations, were founded between 1801 and 1900, while the second-highest percentage of congregations (30.3 percent) were founded between 1951 and 1990. One-fifth (20.3 percent) of responding congregations were founded between 1901 and 1950. Only 5 percent of responding congregations were founded prior to 1800.

Table 9: Year of Establishment of Congregation, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

Establishment	Percentage of Congregations
1800 or before	4.6%
1801 to 1900	37.1%
1901 to 1950	20.3%
1951 to 1990	30.3%
1991 or after	7.7%

Location of Responding Congregations by Community Type

Respondents were asked whether they consider their congregation's location to be urban, suburban, or rural. Almost half (48.4 percent) of respondents reported suburban, while 29 percent reported urban. Slightly more than one-fifth (21.2 percent) of respondents reported that their congregation is rural. Table 10 shows the breakdown of the percentage of respondents reporting their congregation's geographic location by community type.

Respondents were also asked to provide the Zip Code of their congregation to assist in the identification of congregations by region. Greater than one-third (36.0 percent) of responding congregations exist in the Midwest, while the South holds the second-highest percentage of responding congregations (29.3 percent). One-fifth (19.9 percent) of responding congregations are located in the Northeast, while 15 percent exist in the West.

Table 10: Location of Congregations by Community Type, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

Location	Percentage of Congregations
Suburban	48.4%
Urban	29.4%
Rural	21.2%
Prefer not to answer	0.6%
Don't know	0.5%

Congregants' Average Age Within Responding Congregations

When asked to provide an estimate of the average age of congregants, the highest percentage of respondents, at 37 percent, reported an average age of between 55 and 64 years old. This age group was followed closely by those reporting an average age of between 45 and 54 years old, at 35 percent. Fourteen percent of responding congregations reported that the average age of their congregants is 65 and older, while 12 percent reported an average age of between 35 and 44 years old.

This data appears to be consistent with data from the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study (NCSWII) that show as of 2006-2007, 30 percent of religious participants are over the age of 60 and one-fifth of participants are younger than age 35.^{li}

In this study, 28 percent of Evangelical Protestant congregations were found to have an average age of congregants less than 45 years old, while 9 percent of Mainline Protestant congregations had an average age of congregants less than 45 years old.

Table 11: Average Age of Congregants, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

Age of Congregants	Percentage
Younger than 35	1.0%
35 to 44	11.9%
45 to 54	34.6%
55 to 64	37.3%
65 and older	13.7%
Don't know	1.4%
Prefer not to answer	0.2%

Average Adjusted Gross Income of Congregants at Responding Congregations

The largest proportion of responding congregations, at 62 percent, reported an estimated average adjusted gross income (AGI) of congregants between \$40,001 and \$80,000. About 16 percent of responding congregations estimated an average AGI of their congregants at greater than \$80,000. Eleven percent of responding congregations reported that their congregants' average AGI was \$40,000 or less.

These findings are similar to data from the National Congregations Study Wave II (NCSWII) on congregational trends in 2006-2007, where roughly the same lower 10 percent had an average household AGI below \$25,000.^{lii} Further, the NCSWII found that 10 percent of congregants reported an average AGI greater than \$100,000. An earlier study reported that as of the late 1990s only 4 percent of congregant households earned greater than \$100,000 per year,^{liii} indicating an increase in average annual income over time (not adjusted for inflation) among congregant households.

Table 12: Average Income of Congregants, by Percentage of Congregations Reporting

Average Adjusted Gross Income of Families Within Congregation	Percentage
\$40,000 or less	10.5%
\$40,001 to \$60,000	32.7%
\$60,001 to \$80,000	29.3%
\$80,001 or more	15.8%
Don't know	11.2%
Prefer not to answer	0.5%

Average Weekly Attendance at Responding Congregations

In *Congregations in America*, Chaves (2004) reports that 59 percent of U.S. congregations have fewer than 100 “regular participants,” which includes adults and children.^{liv} Less than three-quarters (71 percent) have fewer than 100 regular participating adults. In addition, “The median congregation has only seventy-five regular participants, but the median person is in a congregation with four hundred regular participants.”^{lv} Congregational data from the 2006-2007 wave of the National Congregations Study (NCSWII) show that the mean number of adults attending worship services regularly is 124 and the median number at 50.^{lvi}

When asked about the number of people attending typical weekend services in this study, the highest percentage of responding congregations, at over one-third (36.9 percent), reported an average weekly attendance rate of between 101 and 250 people. A slightly lower percentage of respondents (34.8 percent) reported that between zero and 100 people attend weekly. Mega-churches are those whose weekly attendance that exceeds 2,000 individuals and accounted for just 2 percent of the congregations surveyed.

Table 13: Average Number of People Attending Typical Weekend Services

Average Number of People Attending Weekend Services	Percentage
0 to 100 people	34.8%
101 to 250 people	36.9%
251 to 500 people	16.0%
501 to 1000 people	6.9%
1001 to 2000 people	3.1%
2000 people or more	1.8%
Don't know	0.4%

Section X: How Congregations Compare

Understanding congregational giving trends is vitally important to any congregation concerned about its financial wellbeing. On average, three-quarters of U.S. congregations receive the vast majority (90 percent) of their annual revenue from congregants' offerings and tithes.^{lvii} In addition, nearly three-quarters of religious participants gave something to their congregation in 2006-2007.^{lviii} With the changes in the demography of American congregations, understanding members' giving behaviors and the institutional structures that influence these behaviors is critical for clergy and board, congregational staff and laity, and even congregational members themselves.

In recent decades, giving to religious organizations as a percentage of household income has been declining.^{lix} However, up until the recent recession, inflation-adjusted giving by households to houses of worship had actually increased.^{lx} This signifies that either some households have been giving higher amounts than in the past or there were more households giving, or both. Evidence suggests that the former is true since congregational attendance and membership have been on the decline.^{lxi}

Congregational participants may be "as generous as ever," but a congregation's financial issues are more about congregational involvement than the congregation's fundraising strategy.^{lxii} Indeed, along with certain demographic characteristics, such as congregants' average income, education level, and age, research on congregational giving suggests that involvement is one of the key factors that drive whether one gives to their congregation and how much.^{lxiii} The mutual religious beliefs that congregational participants have, along with congregational requirements and networks, work together to create an "exclusivity" that promotes increased giving by congregants. Those congregations that work to engage members well and in a variety of ways, such as involving them in the ministry and programs of the congregation, appear to receive the greatest financial support from congregational members.

Certain types of denominations appear to be more adept at creating a sense of social cohesion and programmatic involvement, which results in greater support of congregational members.^{lxiv} Further, the level of exclusivity that congregants feel, and thus the extent to which they become involved with the affairs of their congregation and give, appears to be primarily related to the theology that the congregation holds. Ultimately, giving behaviors are rooted in the rituals and practices that constitute religious traditions.^{lxv}

The degree to which a congregational attendee or member is involved in the life and ministry of their congregation plays into their ultimate level of commitment to the congregation. This higher level of commitment appears to translate into greater than average per capita giving. As a result, congregations that create a heightened sense of religious faith and a positive, generous attitude

among congregants toward the congregation, along with promoting institutional involvement, may fare the best in terms of congregational giving.^{lxvi}

In summary, the theological footprint shaping the institutionalized practice of a congregation appears to be the primary factor marking the differences seen across denominations in terms of their fundraising success. This factor appears to relate to the intensity in which congregational members engage and commit to the organization, including the levels of support they provide financially. “Differences in institutionalized practices—pledging, tithing, financial connections between congregations and denominations, endowments, and so on—are theological differences.”^{lxvii}

The one key element that a congregation has to work with in terms of congregational fundraising, beyond its theological stance, is the congregational member’s commitment to the congregation via his or her level of involvement with the congregation.

This study conducted a range of statistical regressions to test for differences in results across denominations in terms of their fundraising and finances. The denominational categories tested included: Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Historically Black Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and congregations classified as “other.”^{lxviii} The following section provides an overview of the key results of this analysis. The table in the Appendix shows complete results of this statistical analysis, along with regression tests of other independent variables including average age of attendees, clergy’s awareness of giving trends with the congregation, and congregational size.

Differences Across Denominations Reporting on Whether Clergy Are Aware of How Much Their Congregants Give and Who Gives

In this study, Mainline Protestant, Historically Black Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish congregations, as well as those classified as “other,” were found to be more likely to have clergy who are aware of how much their congregants give and who gives, when compared with Evangelical Protestant Congregations.

Differences Across Denominations Reporting on Whether the Congregation Has an Endowment

Mainline Protestant congregations and those classified as “other” were found to be more likely to have an endowment, when compared with Evangelical Protestant congregations.

Differences Across Denominations Reporting on Whether the Congregation Offers Financial Education or Charitable Giving Courses to Congregants

Evangelical Protestant congregations are more likely to offer financial education or charitable giving courses to congregants, when compared with Mainline Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and “other” congregations.

Differences Across Denominations Reporting on Whether the Congregation Has an Annual Pledge Campaign

Mainline Protestant and Catholic congregations and those classified as “other” were more likely to report having an annual pledge campaign when compared with Evangelical Protestant congregations.

Appendix

Congregation Characteristics Table #1

Denomination Characteristics	Percent of Clergy Who are Aware of Giving Trends	Congregation Has an Endowment	Congregation Offers Financial/ Giving Courses	Congregation Has an Annual Pledge Campaign	Congregation Began New Fundraising Activities in 2011	Congregation Received at Least One Bequest in 2011
Evangelical Protestant [†]	36.2%	23.0%	56.1%	36.0%	23.4%	22.0%
Mainline Protestant	46.3%*	62.9%*	32.2%*	81.9%*	28.2%*	35.8%*
Historically Black Protestant	80.0%*	0.0%	58.3%	41.7%	41.7%	0.0%
Catholic	73.9%*	43.5%	33.3%*	66.7%*	12.5%	55.0%*
Jewish	58.3%*	62.8%*	2.0%*	78.9%	38.0%	28.6%
Other	62.1%*	68.7%*	29.2%*	85.8%*	34.9%*	27.2%
Average Age of Congregants						
35 years and younger [†]	50.0%	15.8%	65.0%	40.0%	5.0%	5.3%
35-44 years	49.2%	34.3%	57.7%	50.2%	27.1%	21.3%
45-54 years	49.5%	52.8%	42.7%	72.5%	29.4%*	29.5%
55-64 years	43.5%	61.6%	30.5%	79.4%	27.8%*	36.2%
65 years and older	37.3%	57.3%	16.3%*	68.0%	26.0%*	36.6%
Clergy Awareness						
Clergy is Aware of Giving Trends Within Congregation [†]	N/A	58.9%	36.9%	80.4%	32.3%	33.6%
Clergy is Not Aware of Giving Trends Within Congregation	N/A	50.0%*	36.5%	65.2%*	24.2%*	31.2%
Size of Congregation Attendance						
0-100 Congregants [†]	40.1%	44.5%	16.6%	65.1%	22.5%	26.7%
101-250 Congregants	46.8%	61.3%	35.4%*	79.4%	27.9%	32.0%
251-500 Congregants	50.9%	63.3%	52.9%*	78.6%	35.2%*	38.1%
501-1,000 Congregants	54.0%*	54.6%	72.7%*	63.2%	31.7%	38.0%
1001-2,000 Congregants	49.2%	44.4%	82.8%*	50.0%	41.9%*	38.7%
More than 2,000 Congregants	43.2%	37.8%	72.2%*	36.8%*	22.2%	33.3%

The * represents statistical significance wherein the p-value was equal to or less than 0.05 from logistic regression analysis.

The † represents the comparison group by which statistical regressions were conducted across the other groups.

Congregation Characteristics Table #2

Denomination Characteristics	Charitable Receipts Increased from 2010 to 2011	Charitable Receipts Increased from the First Half of 2011 to the First Half of 2012	Revenue Did Not Keep Pace with Inflation Between 2007 and 2011	Pledge Amounts Increased from 2010 to 2011	Finances Improved Since the Worst of the Recession	Congregation Weathered the Recession Well
Evangelical Protestant[†]	58.3%	41.9%	56.0%	54.7%	32.2%	75.3%
Mainline Protestant	65.7%*	41.7%	58.1%	62.4%*	27.1%	73.8%
Historically Black Protestant	50.0%	33.3%	62.5%	40.0%	8.3%	83.3%
Catholic	68.4%	33.3%	50.0%	38.9%	25.0%	62.5%
Jewish	48.6%	37.8%	61.4%	47.4%	33.3%	71.2%
Other	65.6%*	44.9%	54.2%*	63.8%*	32.5%*	73.9%
Average Age of Congregants						
35 years and younger[†]	88.2%	66.7%	33.3%	85.7%	40.0%	80.0%
35-44 years	71.6%	48.7%	37.2%	66.9%	42.0%	83.7%
45-54 years	67.6%	47.8%	54.4%	66.6%	33.9%	79.4%
55-64 years	58.4%*	38.2%*	61.9%*	55.3%*	24.9%	69.6%
65 years and older	54.4%*	29.7%*	70.9%*	48.8%*	14.3%	64.4%
Clergy Awareness						
Clergy is Aware of Giving Trends Within Congregation[†]	64.7%	45.9%	55.0%	59.1%	30.7%	76.5%
Clergy is Not Aware of Giving Trends Within Congregation	61.7%	38.5%*	59.1%	58.6%	27.1%	72.4%
Size of Congregation Attendance						
0-100 Congregants[†]	53.6%	33.1%	68.4%	53.8%	20.5%	67.2%
101-250 Congregants	66.9%*	44.9%*	52.8%*	63.1%*	29.5%*	75.0%
251-500 Congregants	71.2%*	47.6%	49.5%*	67.6%*	35.5%*	80.5%
501-1,000 Congregants	66.4%	46.6%	55.7%	54.2%	32.9%*	77.1%
1001-2,000 Congregants	72.4%	61.3%*	40.7%*	70.6%*	53.2%*	95.3%*
More than 2,000 Congregants	71.0%	48.6%	37.8%*	69.6%	57.9%*	86.8%

The * represents statistical significance wherein the p-value was equal to or less than 0.05 from logistic regression analysis. The † represents the comparison group by which statistical regressions were conducted across the other groups.

Methodology

The 2013 Congregational Economic Impact Study (CEIS) was a joint collaboration between five partners: Lake Institute on Faith & Giving at Indiana University's School of Philanthropy, the Alban Institute, the Indianapolis Center for Congregations (ICC), the National Association of Church Business Administration (NACBA), and MAXIMUM Generosity. The objective of this study is to inform those interested in the wellbeing of American congregations about how they are coping with and confronting not only the recent economic upheaval, but also the gradual, long-term changes taking place in the landscape of U.S. religious life.

Released in 2009, the first wave of this study, conducted in partnership between the Lake Institute on Faith & Giving and the Alban Institute, examined the impact of the recession on U.S. congregations, how congregations responded, and which congregations fared the best. That study, like this one, is considered to be a constituency survey, meaning that the responses provided by survey participants represent those of the average congregation affiliated with the partner organizations. In the 2009 study, which assessed congregational finances between the period 2007–2008, responses were highly representative of Mainline Protestant congregations due to Alban Institute's sole presence as a partnering organization.

Congregations were categorized into the Pew Classification of Protestant Denominations for statistical regressions. See the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life at <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports> for a description of this classification system.

Survey Design

The survey instrument was developed by the research department at the School of Philanthropy and reviewed by the Center for Survey Design at Indiana University and piloted by other partners in this study. The instrument consisted of 43 questions ranging from demographic information to social media to financial and management questions. Both a long version and short version of the survey were developed. The short version, consisting of 32 questions, applied to recipients who were not privy to congregational finances. Survey questions were updated substantively from the initial CEIS study, and many questions were added during this second wave.

Survey Deployment

An independent contractor was selected to employ the survey online. Each partner submitted their database mailing list and records were assimilated into a single database format. Identifying information was removed for each record, leaving only an email address and salutation. A partner ID number was assigned to each record, as was a unique identifier number. Since there

was some membership overlap among the partners, duplicate email addresses were eliminated, and the databases were concatenated for a total of 69,789 records.

An alert email was sent by each partner to their respective mailing lists between three and twelve days in advance of the actual survey email invite, advising the recipient they would soon receive a valid invitation to participate in a survey endorsed by the partner. The invitation to take the survey was emailed to the mailing lists the week after Thanksgiving 2012. Three reminders were emailed, one per week for three weeks. The online survey was developed to support a snowball design, and the email recipient was encouraged to forward the invitation to other congregations. Incentives were offered to those who completed the survey. Upon completion, the respondent was directed to an incentive page of the partner to whom they belonged where they were able to download Christian PDF books, financial manuals, or devotional material. The value of the incentives varied between \$10–\$200 USD.

Survey Results

Of the total records, 9,910 were hard bounces (invalid addresses, unable to deliver, etc.). Several hundred soft bounces (mailbox full, vacation mail, etc.) occurred, and these were included in subsequent reminder emails. The end result was 3,103 valid responses, with 94 percent of the respondents having taken the long survey. Of the total valid responses, 67 percent completed the survey. Due to the snowball design of the survey, a few respondents from foreign congregations completed the survey (e.g., Canada, Brussels, and Australia), and statistical analyses controlled for these respondents.

Some respondents, but very few, reported on organizations that are not considered congregations. These include umbrella organizations or the administrative offices of a group of congregations. Means and medians reported exclude outliers.

Statistical Regression Analyses

This study incorporated a statistical (logistic regression) analysis of several key dependent variables against several key independent variables. The purpose of statistical regressions is to test how the value of one variable (the dependent variable) changes when the value of another variable changes (the independent variable) when all other factors are equal.

The dependent variables in the statistical analysis included whether or not the congregation: realized an increase in fundraising receipts in 2010-2011; realized an increase in fundraising receipts in the first half of 2011 compared with the first half of 2012; has an endowment; had revenues between 2007 and 2011 that were behind inflation rates; offers financial education or giving courses; has an annual pledge campaign; have clergy who are aware of how much congregants give and who gives; saw an increase in pledge amounts between 2010 and 2011;

implemented new fundraising activities in 2011; received at least one bequest in 2011; have revenues that have improved since the worst of the recession; and weathered the recession well. See the table in the Appendix for complete results of these analyses.

The main independent variables of interest in the statistical analysis performed for this study included: congregational denomination, average age of attendees, average weekly attendance, and whether respondents believe clergy are aware of how much congregants give and who gives, which are all shown in the Appendix. The respective comparison categories used within each of these analyses included Evangelical Protestant congregations, the average age group of 34 and below, average weekly attendance between 0-100, and clergy's awareness of congregational giving. Clergy knowledge about congregational giving trends was not used as an independent variable in the regression when it was also used as a dependent variable.

Other control variables include total revenue, average income of congregants, number of full-time employees, location by geography (i.e., urban, rural, etc.), reliance on endowment, average weekly attendance, year congregation was founded, respondent's role (i.e., clergy, laity, etc.), and region in which congregation is located (i.e., by Zip Code).

Because all the dependent variables of interest represent binary outcomes, logistic regressions were used in the analysis. A result is declared statistically significant if the p-value was equal to or less than 0.05.

Limitations

Congregational Categorization

Respondents were provided a list of nearly 100 types of congregations, including Christian and non-Christian denominations, and were provided the opportunity to write in their denomination type or affiliation. Respondents' choices were categorized ad hoc using the Pew Classification of Protestant Denominations for statistical regressions.^{lxix} In addition, all congregations that were members of Maximum Generosity, with the exception of one Jewish congregation, were classified as Evangelical Protestant.

Sample

Because this study was based on a constituency sample of partner organizations, results cannot be compared with or construed as representative of the average congregation within the United States.

Survey Methodology

One key limitation in a survey that asks about organizational finances is lack of standardization across congregations in how they organize and report financial data. This issue becomes more complicated when an administrative office handles the accounts of multiple congregations.

Limitations of the Data

Quantitative data has inherent limitations because it cannot lend itself to an explanation of its own outcome. Any explanation of quantitative data must come from more theoretical sources or be corroborated with other sources of data.

Partners

Alban Institute

The Alban Institute is an independent center of learning and leadership development with a focus on congregations. Located in greater Washington, D.C., Alban is a not-for-profit membership organization that develops and shares knowledge through consulting, publishing, research, and education programs. Go to <http://www.alban.org/> for more information.

Indianapolis Center for Congregations

The Center for Congregations strengthens Indiana congregations by helping them find and use the best resources to address their challenges and opportunities. Through resource consulting, the Center assists congregations in finding and utilizing the best resources—both local and national.

These resources include media materials, consulting services, community agencies, books and much more. The Center also connects congregations to resources through educational events. The Center hosts leaders from various fields for workshops, connecting events, conferences, and long-term learning groups. Congregations learn from each other through networking and sharing stories in Center publications, such as the website, Centerpiece newsletter, and Congregational Stories. Through the Center's matching grants and grant programs, Indiana congregations are eligible to apply for needed assistance to fund their chosen resources and implement the programs they have identified to meet their goals and objectives. The Center also shares what they learn from their experience in Indiana with congregations across the country.

The Center for Congregations is affiliated with the Alban Institute. The Center is a gift to the congregations of Indiana from Lilly Endowment Inc., so most of their services are offered free of charge. Go to <http://centerforcongregations.org/> for more information.

Lake Institute on Faith & Giving

Lake Institute on Faith & Giving exists to serve the public good by exploring the multiple connections between philanthropy and faith within the major religious traditions. Part of the Indiana University School of Philanthropy, its mission is to foster greater understanding of the ways in which faith inspires and informs giving by:

- Providing educational forums that engage the general public, faith leaders, and scholars;
- Encouraging and supporting original multidisciplinary research and scholarship that sets the agenda for critical inquiry into the dynamic relationship between faith and giving in a variety of historical, cultural, and religious contexts;

- Assisting donors in the pursuit of their philanthropic passions regardless of their religious orientation or financial means; and
- Stimulating thoughtful conversations among individuals, families, and faith communities on issues related to faith, money and giving as a way to nurture cultures of generosity.

Go to <http://philanthropy.iupui.edu/the-lake-institute> for more information about Lake Institute on Faith & Giving.

MAXIMUM Generosity

MAXIMUM Generosity was founded by Rev. Brian Kluth. Rev. Kluth is a popular inspirational and motivational generosity speaker for large churches, conventions, colleges, seminaries, fundraising events, and leadership conferences and is the host of the WISE GIVING Q&A Video series at www.ECFA.org.

MAXIMUM Generosity is a publishing ministry that provides bestselling devotionals, videos, and resources to inspire generosity and increase giving among churches, denominations, and non-profits. In 2009, MAXIMUM Generosity started the annual State of the Plate research report on church giving, which has been featured by CBS, ABC, FOX, NBC, *USA Today*, NPR, AP, the *Washington Times*, the *Chronicle of Philanthropy*, the *New York Post*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and hundreds of other publications and radio stations.

In 2013, MAXIMUM Generosity will be changing its name to the Generosity Resource Center. To view the publications that MAXIMUM Generosity offers, visit www.GenerousLife.org

The National Association of Church Business Administration (NACBA)

The National Association of Church Business Administration[®] (NACBA) is an inter-denominational association of churches and individuals that serves the church by promoting the highest level of professional competence in individuals serving Christ through administration in local churches. As a church administration network with more than 60 faith groups, NACBA supports more than 65 chapters in the U.S. and Canada. NACBA's national conference, print resources, web seminars, www.ministrypay.com salary research, regional events, and its national church administration day all focus on building competent church leaders who bring current professional skills to the task of administration in congregations. Go to www.nacba.net for more information.

ⁱ Formerly the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University.

ⁱⁱ The sample used in this report is a constituency sample of partner organizations. See the methodology section for more information.

ⁱⁱⁱ This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{iv} The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Results on comparison data are statistically significant.

^v This is a statistically significant result.

^{vi} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{vii} In comparison to this study, data from the U.S. Congregational Life Survey revealed that 57 percent of all congregations reported having a stable financial base, while another 12 percent reported increasing their financial base in the period 2008-2009. Regrettably, 30 percent of the churches reported a declining financial base or a “seriously threatened” financial situation.

^{viii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{ix} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as “other” include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^x This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 65 years and above.

^{xi} *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2011, 2012*, www.givingusareports.org

^{xii} *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2011, 2012*, www.givingusareports.org

^{xiii} This is according to various studies and reports on charitable giving to religious organizations during this period. See *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Years 2010-2012* at www.givingusareports.org

^{xiii} *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2011, 2012*, www.givingusareports.org

^{xiv} Presser and Stinson (1998), as noted in Mark Chaves, *American Religion: Contemporary Trends*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2011.

^{xv} The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, Feb. 2008, <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>

^{xvi} Mark Chaves, *American Religion: Contemporary Trends*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2011, p. 48. This information is based on the 2006-07 wave of the National Congregations Study.

^{xvii} Mark Chaves, *Congregations in America*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2004, p. 20.

^{xviii} In comparison to this study, data from the 2009 U.S. Congregational Life Survey revealed that 57 percent of all congregations reported having a stable financial base, while another 12 percent reported increasing their financial base in the period 2008-2009. Regrettably, 30 percent of the churches reported a declining financial base or a “seriously threatened” financial situation. Data available at <http://www.uscongregations.org/survey.htm>

^{xix} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as “other” include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xx} This is in terms of statistical significance.

^{xxi} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as “other” include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xxii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{xxiii} This data is not shown in Figure 4.

^{xxiv} Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440

^{xxv} Offerings or collections are included in this category.

^{xxvi} Respondents did not specify what "other" types of revenue include.

^{xxvii} This data is not shown on Figure 6.

^{xxviii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as "other" include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xxix} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as "other" include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xxx} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{xxxi} These are statistically significant results.

^{xxxii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{xxxiii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as "other" include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xxxiv} This is a statistically significant result.

^{xxxv} The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 55 years and above.

^{xxxvi} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as "other" include other types of Christian denominations, including non-denominational, and non-Christian congregations.

^{xxxvii} Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.

^{xxxviii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as "other" include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xxxix} This is a statistically significant result.

^{xl} Examples of these courses include Crown Financial Ministries, Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University, Indiana University's Lake Institute's Creating Congregational Cultures of Generosity, and others.

^{xli} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by type in this report is Evangelical Protestant denominations. Congregations classified as "other" include other types of Christian denominations and non-Christian congregations, except Jewish congregations. Non-denomination congregations are considered Evangelical.

^{xlii} This is a statistically significant result. The reference group for all regression statistics for congregational comparisons by average age of attendees in this report is the youngest group with an average age below 35. This result includes the oldest age groups, 65 years and above.

^{xliii} Pew Research Center's Internet and American Life Project, "The Civic and Community Engagement of Religiously Active Americans," 2011, <http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Social-side-of-religious.aspx>

^{xliv} The groups cited here may or may not be religiously oriented.

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- ^{xlv} Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.
- ^{xlvi} Rebekah Basinger, "When Faith and Governance Meet: The Board's Role in Growing Givers' Hearts," in *Revolution in Generosity: Transforming Stewards to be Rich Toward God*, Wesley K. Willmer (Ed.), Moody Publishers, 2008, p. 293.
- ^{xlvi} Respondents did not specify what "other" types of revenue included.
- ^{xlvi} Data is not shown in Table 7.
- ^{xlix} The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, "U.S. Religious Landscape Survey," Feb. 2008, <http://religions.pewforum.org/pdf/report-religious-landscape-study-full.pdf>
- ⁱ Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.
- ⁱⁱ Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.
- ⁱⁱⁱ Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.
- ^{liii} Mark Chaves, *Congregations in America*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2004.
- ^{liv} Mark Chaves, *Congregations in America*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2004.
- ^{lv} Mark Chaves, *Congregations in America*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 2004, p.81
- ^{lvi} Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.
- ^{lvii} Mark Chaves, "Financing American Religion," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, Spring 2002, 35, 41-54.
- ^{lviii} Mark Chaves and Shawna Anderson, "Continuity and Change in American Congregations: Introducing the Second Wave of the National Congregations Study," *Sociology of Religion*, 2008, 69:4, 415-440.
- ^{lix} Mark Chaves, "Financing American Religion," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, Spring 2002, 35, 41-54.
- ^{lx} See Mark Chaves (2002) and compare with *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2011*, www.givingusareports.org.
- ^{lxi} See the Giving to Religion chapter for an overview of these studies in *Giving USA: The Annual Report on Philanthropy for the Year 2011*, www.givingusareports.org
- ^{lxii} Mark Chaves, "Financing American Religion," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, Spring 2002, 35, 41-54, p. 42.
- ^{lxiii} Roger Finke, Matt Bahr, and Christopher Scheitle, "Toward explaining congregational giving," *Social Science Research*, 2006, 35, 620-641; D.R. Hoge, "Introduction: the problem of understanding church giving," *Review of Religious Research*, December 1994, 36, 101-110.
- ^{lxiv} However, Finke et. al (2006) noted that congregational difference for giving found in their study could be caused by differing "dimensions of requirements, beliefs, and involvement" that were not accounted for in their model.
- ^{lxv} Mark Chaves, "Financing American Religion," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, Spring 2002, 35, 41-54.
- ^{lxvi} D.R. Hoge, "Introduction: the problem of understanding church giving," *Review of Religious Research*, December 1994, 36, 101-110.
- ^{lxvii} Mark Chaves, "Financing American Religion," *New Directions for Philanthropic Fundraising*, Spring 2002, 35, 41-54.
- ^{lxviii} Respondents classified as "other" were most likely to be Unitarian Universalist, other Christian faiths, or other non-Christian faiths, such as New Thought.
- ^{lxix} See the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life at <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports> for a description of this classification system.